

## Oman gives details of planned parliament

NICOSIA (R) — Oman's ruler Sultan Qaboos has given details of plans for an elected consultative assembly, the first in the Gulf apart from Kuwait's dissolved parliament. Sultan Qaboos, quoted by the Omani News Agency, said prominent personalities from each of Oman's 59 counties would choose three candidates. The people would then elect one from each county and the government would appoint a speaker. He did not say when elections would be held. Sultan Qaboos said the assembly would present people's viewpoints and suggest solutions. "It's a bridge between the government and the citizens," Sultan Qaboos announced plans for a parliament last November. He has ruled Oman since 1970 when he replaced his father in a bloodless coup. At present, Oman has a state consultative council with 52 appointed members from central government, the counties and the private sector.

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## Iraq circulates abrogation of annexation

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iraq circulated Monday as a U.N. document a March 5 decision by its Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), signed by President Saddam Hussein, formally abrogating the annexation of Kuwait and ordering the decision to be published in Iraq's official gazette. The document, with a covering letter from Iraqi U.N. Representative Abdul Amir Al Anbari, went beyond a March 3 letter from Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz containing a general acceptance of all Iraq's obligations under a Security Council resolution the previous day. That resolution listed a number of demands, including the immediate rescinding by Iraq of its actions purporting to annex Kuwait after its invasion of the emirate last Aug. 2. Kuwaiti U.N. Representative Mohammad Abdul Hassan said at the time the annexation should be rescinded by Iraq's National Assembly, the body which originally declared the emirate part of Iraq, and that the abrogation order should be published in Iraq's official gazette. The RCC order said all its decisions "subsequent to Aug. 2, 1990 regarding Kuwait are null and void."

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## Crown Prince urges solutions to all problems

By John Rice  
The Associated Press

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Sunday the world has a brief opportunity to solve the Arab-Israeli crisis in the wake of the Gulf war, and he stressed the need for economic as well as political solutions.

"There is a window of opportunity of one year," Prince Hassan said in an interview with the Associated Press.

"Maybe some Israelis think they can wait out that year," he added. "I think that is a major miscalculation in terms of regional stability and in terms of Israel becoming a part of the Middle East region."

After that, he said, peace efforts would be complicated by the onset of Israeli and U.S. election campaigns which he said have repeatedly stalled past Middle East peace efforts.

The Crown Prince's remarks came as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker toured the region to discuss post-war security arrangements and a settlement of the longstanding Arab-Israeli dispute.

U.S. President George Bush Wednesday called for renewed efforts to end that conflict, and Mr. Baker was due to meet Palestinian leaders Tuesday.

"Clearly these are leading (Palestinian) luminaries and they are leading in the West Bank," Prince Hassan said. "It is an indication of direct talks between the United States and the PLO."

U.S. refusal to talk with the Palestine Liberation Organisation in past years helped kill many peace efforts.

A brief U.S. dialogue with the PLO ended last year when the organisation failed to firmly disavow an attack on an Israeli beach by one of its smaller guerrilla factions.

Mr. Bush said Friday the PLO had "lost credibility" by siding with Iraq in the Gulf war, but did not rule out eventual talks with

the organisation.

The PLO's pro-Iraqi position angered many of the rich Gulf states that had funded it.

Prince Hassan said Mr. Bush's statements on Wednesday, which stressed the need for an Arab-Israeli solution based on U.N. Security Council resolutions, showed "a very serious commitment to international legality."

But the Crown Prince added that those resolutions, which call for Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories in exchange for peace, refer to relations between states alone.

"We have yet to see what importance the U.S. administration gives to the central issue, the involvement of the Palestinians," the Crown Prince said.

He added that Jordanians and Palestinians "are extremely sceptical" about whether the fact that a coalition was massed to reverse Iraq's invasion of Kuwait "can carry over into an in-depth solution through international legitimacy of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

"I think it is difficult to judge the contribution of the United States today until we know clearly what the United States contribution is."

But he added, "I can't afford to sound sceptical about any initiative... an initiative by definition means change and hopefully means a light at the end of the tunnel."

The Prince urged policymakers to look beyond a narrow political solution.

"If Israel wants to become a member of the Middle East region on the basis of dealing with Middle East peoples, it has to give equal value to conflict resolution and clearly the countries of the... region have to give greater emphasis to economic integration."

He called for a similar broad vision for other post-war security pacts.

"Security... is a broad term... and I think it is based on political

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## PLO approves West Bank leaders'—Baker meeting

Combined agency dispatches

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation (PLO) has given its approval to a meeting between Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the Palestine news agency Wafa reported Monday.

A statement issued in Tunis said the decision was made at a meeting of the PLO leadership chaired by Yasser Arafat Saturday.

The decision has been conveyed to Palestinians in the occupied territories, and the meeting with Mr. Baker is to take place Tuesday, the agency said.

The go-ahead was announced as Mr. Baker arrived in occupied Jerusalem on a 4-hour visit as part of his current Mideast tour to explore avenues towards an Arab-Israeli peace.

The Palestinian representatives were not identified, but Wafa said they are "the same personalities who held talks with the PLO" last week.

It was referring to a European Community (EC) delegation of the foreign ministers of Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Italy, who held discussions with Israeli and Palestinian leaders in occupied Jerusalem last week.

The Palestine side to the talks demanded that the PLO have a role in the eventual peace talks. Mr. Baker told reporters in Cairo Monday that the meeting with the Palestinians would not constitute a resumption of the dialogue with the PLO.

The United States broke off talks with the PLO last June, saying factions had engaged in "terrorism" against Israel despite a pledge by Mr. Arafat to abandon such tactics.

Wafa said the decision to give the go-ahead to the West

Bank leaders was taken "in light of the positive elements" in U.S. President George Bush's recent speech before the U.S. Congress, in which he aimed for a comprehensive peace settlement between the Arab states and Israel.

Mr. Arafat reiterated his welcome of Mr. Bush's pledge to renew efforts for a land-for-peace settlement plan in an interview with Spain's leading daily El Pais Monday, according to Wafa. "It's the first time that a U.S. president has spoken with clarity in assuring that there must be peace in exchange for territory and justice in exchange for security," Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying.

He said he considered Mr. Bush's position "a decisive step." Wafa said the Palestinian group would convey to Mr. Baker "the determination of the Palestinian people to recover their national rights under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative."

They would stress to Mr. Baker their demands for the "application of international resolutions on Palestine," he said.

Palestinian lawyers, doctors, church leaders and trade unionists have signed a petition to Mr. Baker demanding Israel withdraw from the occupied territories.

"We, the sons of the Palestinian people in the occupied state of Palestine, representatives of its national and popular organisations, assert the determination of our people to continue the just national struggle to achieve their legitimate right to freedom, dignity, national independence and democracy," the petition said.

The petition demands an end to Israeli occupation, the right to their own state and recognition of the PLO.

## Baker pursues peace plan with Israelis

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — On a mission

marked by violence, Secretary of State James Baker undertook Monday to persuade the Israeli government to set peace terms the Arabs could accept.

He denounced the stabbing deaths of four Israeli women Sunday by a Palestinian as "an effort to kill peace," and cancelled a scheduled walking tour of Arah Jerusalem. Police said the assailant had told them the stabbings were meant as a "message to Baker."

The secretary of state scheduled a meeting with a Palestinian delegation while carefully ruling out a renewal of U.S. talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Criticising the PLO for siding with Iraq in the six-week Gulf war, Mr. Baker said the meeting he will have Tuesday afternoon with Palestinians in the home of U.S. Consul General Philip Wilcox "does not represent a reopening of the dialogue" broken off a year ago.

The Palestine news agency Wafa said Monday that the PLO had given its approval to the meeting.

Wafa did not identify the Palestinians who would meet with Mr. Baker, but said they are "the same personalities who held talks with the PLO" last week (see story below).

According to the French Foreign Ministry, the Palestinian delegation to the EC meeting included Faisal Hussein and Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij.

Arriving in occupied Jerusalem Monday, Mr. Baker pledged to "work just as hard as we can to see if we can provide a peace between Arabs and Israelis."

Mr. Baker was to meet with Foreign Minister David Levy later Monday and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defence Minister Moshe Arens on Tuesday.

At a brief news conference in Cairo before flying here, Mr. Baker said the PLO's support for Iraq had been "a fundamental mistake."

Referring to the PLO, Mr. Baker added: "They remain, as far as we are concerned, diminished as a consequence of that."

The Palestinians who will meet with him have held frequent talks in the past with U.S. and Israeli officials, Mr. Baker said.

Told the PLO is said to have selected members of the group, Mr. Baker shot back: "The PLO says a lot of things."

Mr. Baker said the PLO must take the first move if it wanted to reopen the dialogue with Washington.

"The PLO knows what is required if there is to be a reopening of the dialogue," Baker told reporters after two hours of talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

He did not spell out the requirements. Egyptian officials said they went beyond the previous demand that the PLO condemn a May 1990 Palestinian guerrilla attack but also gave no details.

## France calls for EC summit on Mideast

PARIS (Agencies) — France wants to hold an urgent European Community (EC) summit in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said Monday.

"France will propose to its partners that the 12 heads of state and government meet very rapidly without waiting for the scheduled European summit in June," Mr. Dumas said in an interview with the daily newspaper Le Monde.

He also said he was ready to receive Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat in Paris.

Mr. Dumas said he believed Palestinian leaders would accept a demilitarised Palestinian state if that was the price for having an independent country.

"France believes the time has come to draw up the lessons (of the crisis) and to prepare the future," Mr. Dumas said, adding that the Gulf war had exposed Europe's limitations.

"Europe lacks powers in the field of international policy and lacks its own means of defence and security."

"Thanks of the Gulf crisis, we are confronted by realities: What do we want to do with Europe?" he said, adding that such questions would be addressed at an emergency summit.

Asked whether he was prepared to meet Mr. Arafat, whose PLO was excluded from contacts with an EC foreign ministers' delegation which visited the Middle East recently, Mr. Dumas said: "Yes, and this would not be anything new."

"At the present time, there is no other organisation than the PLO which is representative of the Palestinians. If another existed one day it would be welcome."

On a demilitarised Palestinian state, Mr. Dumas said: "If those were the conditions for the creation of a Palestinian state, I think the Palestinians would accept them. They would be wrong not to but that is their business."

A Luxembourg government spokesman said the community had been informed of France's request for an emergency summit and one would be held.

"If someone asks for a summit you have to have one," the spokesman said. "We're looking

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## Hogg underlines Jordan's key role in peace talks

By Mariam M. Shahin  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg Monday concluded a one-and-a-half-day visit to Jordan during which he met with His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Foreign Minister Tariq Al Masri and Minister of Finance Basel Jaraneh. He said he believed that the Jordanian government appreciated Britain's efforts to reestablish British Jordanian relations to where they had been prior to the Gulf crisis.

Although Mr. Hogg made no conclusive statement as to what agreements Britain and Jordan had come to, he did say that the Jordanian government "appreciates that we wish to resume that state of friendship which characterised our relationships for very many years."

Mr. Hogg told a press conference that Jordan was a very important state in the region and that in Britain's view it had a significant role to play in the future of the Middle East.

There have been disagreements of quite an important kind over the last few months... now that the conflict is over we are very anxious to restore good relations with Jordan... my presence here in part is designed to achieve that," Mr. Hogg said.

Mr. Hogg said he was in Jordan to assess how Jordanians see the present situation in the Arab World as well as to signify the belief of the United Kingdom that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian question is of very great importance.

On his talks with the Crown Prince and the two ministers here, Mr. Hogg said he was struck by Jordan's "flexibility" and the importance that Jordan



His Majesty King Hussein Monday meets with British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg (Petra photo)

attached to the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli question. "They want to be involved in that process. They are rather concerned that they are not involved in the discussions within the eight (Arab states). They are concerned that they don't have the close relations with the United States that they did have," he said.

The current strains in Jordanian-American relations, Mr. Hogg said, was not surprising "in view of what happened." He stressed, however, that the situation may be temporary. "In due course all the coalition countries will wish to ensure that their relations with Jordan are good... because Jordan is a very key player," he said.

Mr. Hogg said that in any Palestinian-Israeli settlement "it is artificial to suppose that you could secure an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians which did not involve Jordan in the discussions and maybe in the ultimate solution."

The British Foreign Office minister said that "it is in everybody's interest that Jordan be

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## Jordan denies report of clash

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Monday denied a report by Reuters News Agency which quoted an unnamed Jordanian official as saying that six Arab gunmen, who were reportedly shot and killed in a clash with the Israeli forces, came from Jordan.

A statement by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said: "The official spokesman has denied a Reuters report which was broadcast by Israel Radio about the clash that occurred Monday morning."

The spokesman expressed surprise that a report which contained a statement attributed to a Jordanian source had been published without authorisation from the concerned official sources here.

"The Jordanian Armed Forces are now investigating the report and are searching the area where the clash took place as alleged by the Israeli broadcast," said the spokesman. He said that the Jordanian Armed Forces had not yet reached final conclusions.

Reuters had said that six gunmen were shot dead by the Israeli troops after attempting a cross border raid on Monday and that the six came from Syria and could be members of a radical Palestinian faction based there.

Reuters, which quoted a senior Jordanian source for its report, said that the six slain Arabs entered Jordan from Syria early Monday and tried to cross into Israel from the hilltop of Um Qais, an area near the Yarmouk River.

For its part, Israel Radio said that six Arabs were shot dead after they tried to infiltrate into

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## Iran hits Arab Gulf security proposal

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said Monday its exclusion made a Gulf security plan drawn up by Syria and seven other Arab countries defective.

"If the security of the 'Persian' Gulf and the Sea of Oman is to be safeguarded in the true sense of the word then Iran's views will have to be considered," Vice-President Hassan Ebrahim Habibi said, according to the Iranian news agency IRNA.

Mr. Habibi described the pact proposed by Syria, Egypt and six Gulf Arab states as "defective," IRNA said.

The plan, unveiled in Damascus last Wednesday, relies on Gulf petrodollars and Egyptian and Syrian troops to maintain security in the region after the Gulf war.

The next day Mr. Habibi and Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati rushed to Damascus. Tehran's main Arab ally during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Syria sided with the United States and Iran declared neutrality in the crisis.

Tehran says Gulf security is strictly the job of regional countries. Iran's vast area, 55 million people and strong army would make it the dominant force in any collection of Gulf states.

Mr. Habibi was speaking Monday on his return to Tehran from Ankara where he discussed the proposed security plan with Turkish President Turgut Ozal.

Diplomats in Damascus said Friday that during talks with the Iranian delegation, President Hafez Al Assad had sought to allay Tehran's worries by promising a future Iranian role in the pact.

But Mr. Habibi said on Monday that while the plan called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the region, it did so only in a vague manner, IRNA reported.

The proposed plan has been welcomed by the Western members of the anti-Iraqi coalition.

## Iraq denies using or ordering use of chemicals to end unrest

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ Monday denied that it used or had authorised the use of chemical weapons to end the uprising against the government of President Saddam Hussein.

A brief statement from Iraq's U.N. mission also denied that Iraq had ever used such weapons "inside Iraq."

Newspaper reports over the weekend had asserted that Iraq had authorised the use of chemical weapons to quell the Shi'ite Muslim rebellion in southern Iraq and Kurdish unrest in the north.

The report said the United States called in senior Iraqi officials in Washington and at the United Nations to protest the plan.

Other reports said U.S. military forces in southern Iraq planned to bomb any Iraqi units that

unleashed chemical weapons.

On Monday, Iraq's U.N. mission released a statement saying "the government of Iraq categorically denies recent allegations implying that the Iraqi government has used or intended to use chemical weapons inside Iraq."

"The Iraqi government reiterates that it has not and will never use such weapons for any purpose inside Iraq," it said.

Meanwhile Iraqi opposition leader claimed Shi'ite Muslim rebels were holed up in mosques in the holy city of Karbala battling with government troops who are shelling them with artillery and tank fire.

They said that diehard fighters as well as civilians trapped in the crossfire were being killed in the bombardment and that 500 have been killed or wounded since Friday.

Official sources in Baghdad said Republican Guard troops have reestablished control of the city, 160 kilometres south of the Iraqi capital, after several days of fierce combat.

They gave no details. But Iraqi forces appear to have been isolating centres of resistance such as Karbala and the southern port city of Basra and pounding them with artillery and tanks.

Karbala, famed for its mosques, is revered by Shi'ites as the burial place of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad and one of the sect's principal saints. It has a peacetime population of around 120,000.

Ayatollah Taqi Al Mufaddesi, leader of the Shi'ite Islamic Labour Organisation, told reporters in Beirut as exile leaders met

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## Maghreb union reaffirms support for PLO and Iraq

TUNIS (R) — Five Maghreb

states Monday condemned any attempt to undermine the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which Washington has shunned in its latest Middle East peace drive.

Leaders of Libya, Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia, and the Moroccan foreign minister also warned unnamed states against interfering in Iraq's internal affairs.

The meeting of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) in the Libyan town of Ras Lanuf said the PLO was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, according to Libyan Radio, monitored in Tunis.

It criticised what it said was a "hostile campaign by certain countries against the PLO." It did not name them.

It said the goal of the campaign was to discredit the PLO's international right to speak for Palestinians.

Washington has said it will not resume a dialogue with the PLO

as punishment for the PLO's support of Baghdad in the Gulf war.

Several Arab states have withdrawn their backing from the PLO for the same reason.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, in a brief speech to the closing ceremony, called on the organisation, founded in 1989, to help strengthen Arab unity.

As the one-day summit closed, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was in Israel planning to meet Palestinians in the occupied territories.

He is on a tour pursuing a broad Middle East peace initiative backed at a weekend summit in Saudi Arabia by Washington's Arab allies in the Gulf war (see page 2).

The Maghreb summit warned unnamed states against any attempt on the territorial integrity of Iraq and said that with Kuwait now free from Iraqi occupation, it was time for Iraq to return to the Arab fold and play its full part.

Morocco's King Hassan, the only head of state not present, sent his foreign minister to the meeting in the coastal town, 600 kilometres east of Tripoli.

The king said he wanted the meeting adjourned until after the post-war situation in the Gulf had settled down to give the Maghreb states "time to evaluate and analyse developments and draw the necessary conclusions."

Public opinion in all five countries was firmly on the side of Iraq in the Gulf war. Morocco sent a small defensive force to Saudi Arabia after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi told his guests Sunday night that the United Nations should consider using forces to get Israel to leave territories it has occupied.

He said that the U.N. should pursue resolutions on Israel with the same vigour that it pursued those against Iraq.



## Iraq says Britain trying to undermine Saddam government

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, in its first comment on opposition groups, accused Britain on Monday of trying to undermine President Saddam Hussein's government.

"Since when has Great Britain been about Iraq's interest or democracy in Iraq?" asked a commentary in the ruling Baath party newspaper Al Thawra, apparently responding to a meeting in London last week between British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg and Iraqi opposition figures.

"It is understandable for Britain to embrace communists, defeatist saboteurs, sectarians and other mercenaries," said leading columnist Abdul Jabbar Mohsen. "In Iraq there is a nationalist government which Britain and with it America, Zionism and agent Arab governments are seeking to undermine because it is a source of strength for the Arab Nation," he said.

The commentary by Mohsen, head of the Defence Ministry's political department during the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran war, was published as more than 30 leaders and delegates of 23 groups opposed to the government began a three-day conference in Beirut.

"If those in opposition are now

30 parties and groups, how much will their number be when they become a government, and how many fragments the Americans, Zionists and British intend to partition Iraq," the Al Thawra commentary said.

"The best proof of an agent's cowardice is remaining outside his home, finding satisfaction in serving his masters, earning money from their police and ported by their intelligence services."

"Baghdad radio, which has said nothing about reports outside Iraq of unrest in the southern Shi'ite Muslim heartland and in the mountainous Kurdish north, Monday again stressed the need for unity between Arabs and Kurds."

"All Iraqis, during both the eight-year (Iraq-Iran) war and the honourable struggle against the U.S.-Atlantic aggression against Iraq, stood united," it said.

"We are confident that the momentous unity between Arabs and Kurds ... will guarantee our victory in the battle of reconstruction what the aggressors destroyed," the radio said, referring to the U.S.-led offensive.

The Kurdish party newspaper Al Iraq said in an editorial Saturday that Iraqi Kurds "continue forever to be Iraq's soldiers."



HELPING HAND: Trucks laden with relief supplies contributed by Jordanians ready to leave for Iraq (photo by Youssef Al 'Aban)

## Rebels claim capturing Ethiopian town

NAIROBI (AP) — Eritrean rebels, who already control one of Ethiopia's two ports, are claiming capture of a town near the Red Sea coast.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) said in a broadcast that its guerrillas captured Ed, a small coastal town, in a two-hour battle Friday.

The Sunday night broadcast was monitored in Nairobi. It was impossible to independently verify the claim.

The rebels said they "put out of action" 200 government troops and destroyed five tanks. More than 300 Eritrean conscripts in the Ethiopian army did not fire a single bullet, according to the broadcast.

Ed is 150 kilometres northwest of Assab, the government-held port near the Djibouti border that is home to Ethiopia's only oil refinery.

Assab handles 70 per cent of Ethiopia's exports and imports and is also the gateway for emergency food for an estimated 1.2 million people in Tigre province.

The Eritreans control Ethiopia's only deep-water harbour of Massawa, which they captured early last year in the largest offensive of a 30-year war for the independence of Ethiopia's northernmost province, Eritrea.

## Iran rules out keeping Iraqi jets

ANKARA (R) — Iran Monday ruled out keeping Iraqi planes flown to its territory during the Gulf war as part of a \$900-million reparations claim against Baghdad.

"The idea is misleading," Iranian First Vice-President Hassan Ebrahim Habibi told reporters at the end of a three-day visit to Turkey.

"Rumours that the planes will be kept to compensate for our losses during the 1980-88 war are not true," he said. "Our losses are \$900 billion and we will ask for all of it."

Some of Iraq's top combat planes were among aircraft that sought sanctuary in Iran during the six-week war with the U.S.-led coalition that ended on Feb. 28 in a rout of Iraq's forces and a retreat from Kuwait.

Allied military spokesmen have said some of the estimated 140 Iraqi aircraft flown to Iran crashed while trying to land.

Iran, which stayed neutral in the war against its old enemy, has only acknowledged the arrival of about two dozen planes.

It said it would hold them for the duration of the conflict and their pilots would be treated as prisoners of war.

Mr. Habibi gave no indication when the aircraft would be returned.

"The planes are seized according to international law and all relevant documents have been handed to international officials concerned," he said.

But asked by reporters whether

Tehran might confiscate them in part payment of reparations sought from the previous Gulf war, he replied:

"The idea is misleading because the damage inflicted on Iran during the eight-year war is so huge that a few second-hand and wrecked planes cannot compensate even one thousandth of it."

In Baghdad the director-general of Iraqi Airways said he was waiting to go to Tehran to arrange for the return of five of the national carrier's planes and six Airbus aircraft from Kuwait during the seven-month occupation of the emirate.

Turkish Premier Yildirim Akbulut announced at the end of the visit by Habibi Monday that the two leaders agreed that Iraq should not be divided.

"Iran and Turkey carry the same opinion that the Iraqi map should remain unchanged," Mr. Akbulut told a joint news conference at Esenboga airport before Mr. Habibi's departure.

Kurdish guerrillas have been battling Iraq's army in northern Iraq. Heavy fighting also was reported in southern Iraq between Shi'ite Muslim militants and troops.

Mr. Habibi paid a three-day visit to Ankara to discuss bilateral issues and developments in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Turkey supported the United States throughout the Gulf crisis and allowed U.S. aircraft to use a southern air base to launch bombing missions against Iraq.

## Sudan leader reaffirms federation

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's military leader has reaffirmed his commitment to Sharia law and to a new federal system, introduced in a bid to end civil war.

Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al Bashir last month divided Africa's largest country into nine federal states.

The federal system is popular in southern Sudan, where the rebel Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) has been fighting since 1983 for a secular state.

The official Sudanese News Agency (SUNA) said last week a new criminal code applying Sharia law to Sudan's largely Muslim northern state but exempting its predominantly Christian and animist south will come into force on March 22.

Gen. Bashir's junta hopes that exempting the south from harsh Sharia punishments such as the amputation of a thief's hand and stoning of adulterers will open the way to peace.

Speaking to legal officers in Khartoum, Gen. Bashir praised Sharia as the only code that provided justice to all and contrasted it with the alien legal, political and social system imposed by British colonial rulers.

"Although we are not going to keep ourselves isolated from the experience of other people, the English precedents, the English law and English legal scholars will no longer be regarded as references for our courts," SUNA quoted him as saying Monday.

The war, the second in the south since Sudan gained independence from Britain in 1956, erupted after a previous military government attempted to impose Sharia nationwide.

The army newspaper Guwat Al Mussallahah said Monday government forces had destroyed a number of rebel camps last week in the southern state of Upper Nile.

The daily said they seized arms and ammunition after killing dozens of rebels and wounding hundreds more.

It also reported the killing of rebels and arms seizures in Mari-di in western Equatoria last Saturday. There was no mention of any government casualties.

### Disease kills dozens

A meningitis outbreak has killed dozens of people in southern Sudan, but the infectious brain disease has been brought under control, a Health Ministry official said Monday.

Sadeq Mahjoub, head of the ministry's epidemiology and endemic diseases department, told the Associated Press that 32 people have died and 208 others are known to have meningitis now.

## Oilwell fires, slick part of war legacy

DHAHRAN (AP) — Rain filtered through sulphurous clouds falls on Gulf countries and a 175-kilometre oil slick clogs the Saudi Arabian coast, part of the dark legacy of the Gulf war.

Until firefighters put out hundreds of blazing Kuwaiti oil wells, the black cloud is likely to affect thousands of square kilometres of Kuwait, Iran and other countries in the area.

Most of Kuwait's hundreds of oilwells were ablaze when Iraqi troops withdrew from Kuwait. Between 80 and 85 per cent of Kuwait's oil production capacity was damaged by the fires.

Satellites have detected smoke 1,200 kms downwind of the war zone in Iran, and "black rain" has been reported in southern Turkey 950 kms away.

Kuwaiti petroleum is high in sulphur; raising the acidity of the rain that filters through the smoke clouds.

The smoke itself dumps soot, which is harmless in itself but pollutes water if it falls on snow in Iranian and Turkish mountain ranges that later becomes melt-water.

The smoke itself can be dangerous, causing breathing problems in babies and the elderly, said the world Conservation Monitoring Centre based in Cambridge, England.

It reported that the cloud will also blot out the sun's rays in places and surface temperatures could fall by 5 to 10 degrees Centigrade (9 to 18 degrees Fahrenheit).

This could disrupt agriculture by cutting short the spring growing season, affecting food supplies.

Chemicals dumped by the smoke cloud could increase soil acidity, the centre said in a statement.

"The blighting of the land will extend well beyond the war zone, affecting people in no way connected with the hostilities," it warned.

South of the war zone, the oil slick clings to the Saudi Arabian coast.

The kingdom's Meteorology and Environmental Protection Administration has provided no recent figures on numbers of

birds killed, although environmental sources in the kingdom said they were in the thousands.

The figure given by the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, was echoed by the world conservation monitoring centre which estimated that between 10,000 and 20,000 birds have been killed.

"It's been really devastating," said one source in Saudi Arabia. "They've been working away, they've been cleaning some birds up. But once they've got oiled, there's not whole lot that can be done."

So far, most of the dead birds have been cormorants as well as great-crowned and black-necked grebes, which are native to the area.

But with the migratory season beginning, a number of mallard, shovellers, curlew and sandplover have been found oiled, felled as they travel through the region.

Estimates of the amount of oil in Gulf waters range anywhere between 1.5 million and three million barrels — and up. No full-scale survey results have yet been released.

The state-owned oil company, Saudi Aramco, reports it has recovered the equivalent of 160,000 barrels of oil.

A map compiled by the Saudi Environmental Protection Agency showed several large slicks sullied Gulf waters. The biggest is along the Saudi coastline, much of it heavy oil several centimetres deep in places.

That slick, which has stopped about 25 kms north of Saudi Arabia's largest water desalination plant near Jubail, is causing the greatest environmental concern.

A second large slick floats off Kuwait itself around the damaged Sea Island offshore terminal, once Kuwait's biggest petroleum export terminal.

Only about 10 per cent of the slick is heavy oil and it is thought unlikely to have major environmental impact.

A third slick, in the north-central Gulf, shows up mainly as a thin oily sheen on the water's surface and surrounds several small islands that are important turtle-nesting areas. Its long-term impact has not been assessed.

## Italian foreign minister holds talks in Beirut

BEIRUT (AP) — Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis met government leaders Monday for talks on bilateral relations, Middle East developments and possibly the fate of an Italian hostage in Lebanon.

Mr. De Michelis was accompanied by 18 aides and 26 Italian journalists on the first Beirut visit by an Italian foreign minister since Lebanon's civil war broke out in 1975.

He was greeted by Foreign Minister Faris Bouciz, and was driven with him in a heavily guarded motorcade to president Elias Hrawi's residence for a working lunch also attended by Prime Minister Omar Karame.

Mr. De Michelis and Mr. Bouciz then held talks at the Foreign Ministry.

The talks were originally intended to precede the lunch, but a two-hour delay in Mr. De Michelis' arrival forced the schedule change.

The Foreign Ministry said the talks would focus on conveying a conference on regional security

and cooperation among Mediterranean nations which Rome believes would solve regional problems.

The two sides are also expected to revive trade relations and reopen Italy's commercial centre in Beirut. It has been closed since the early days of the civil war.

The Italian government decided earlier this month to extend technical assistance estimated at \$500,000 to help repair Lebanon's war-battered water system, telephone network and electrical generating plants.

That move followed the implementation of an Arab League-brokered peace plan by President Elias Hrawi's government.

The first step was to oversee the withdrawal of all militia forces with their heavy weapons from the greater Beirut area in December. The aim is ultimately to disband the militias, who conducted most of the fighting in the civil war in which an estimated 150,000 people were killed.

There has been little violence in Beirut since December.

## Hostages moved out of Beirut, security men say

BEIRUT (AP) — Extremists are believed to have spirited Western hostages out of the south Beirut slums where most of the captives have been held, security sources said Monday.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the hostages were now believed to be held in hideouts in and around the ancient Roman town of Baalbek in the Bekaa Valley of east Lebanon.

The report coincided with a new drive by the United States, Britain and probably Italy, to secure the hostages' release through the good offices of Iran and Syria following the end of the Gulf war.

"The army command is convinced that none of the hostages is in Beirut or its environs any more," one source said.

"Lebanese troops searched all suspected hideouts controlled by Shiite fanatics in south Beirut last week and there was no trace of any of the captives," he added.

The source said the search included the main two barracks used by the fundamentalist Hizbollah in the shantytowns of Hajjaj and Hay Madi, where most of the 13 missing Westerners were believed imprisoned.

The missing men comprise six Americans, four Britons, two Germans and an Italian.

The Americans are journalist Terry Anderson, educators Thomas Sutherland, Jesse Turner, Alan Steen and Joseph Cicippio, and writer Edward Tracy. Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated

Press, is the longest held. He was kidnapped March 16, 1985.

The army's search operation was primarily conducted to ascertain that militias which fought Lebanon's nearly 16-year-old civil war have actually withdrawn their heavy weapons out of the capital as they pledged to do under a Syrian-backed plan to demilitarise the city.

The withdrawal took place Dec. 3 as part of President Elias Hrawi's effort to enforce an Arab League-brokered peace plan. It envisages restoring government control of "greater Beirut" as a step towards disbanding the militias by March 22.

The search operation, which is continuing, has also established that there have been no violations of the plan within the greater Beirut area, another security source said.

He said that military intelligence believes the hostages were smuggled to the Bekaa before the militias withdrew in December. "They're probably being held now in the Sheikh Abdallah Baracks in Baalbek and two or three neighbouring hamlets under Hizbollah's control," the source said. "There's been no word about their physical welfare."

Hizbollah is believed to be the parent movement of the factions holding most of the hostages. The party is backed by an estimated 3,000 Iranian Revolutionary guards who have been stationed in and around Baalbek since 1982.

## Text of statement by eight Arab states on U.S. peace plan

RIYADH (R) — Following is a partial text of a statement by foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Syria after talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Saudi Arabia.

"The ministers expressed their appreciation for the decisive contribution by the United States of America to the liberation of Kuwait and in supporting international legitimacy."

"They also expressed their appreciation for the contents of the address by His Excellency President George Bush to the American Congress in which he gave positive treatment to the issues of security in the region and the Palestinian question."

"They expressed their resolve to continue to work with the president of the United States and his secretary of state in order to realise success on these issues."

"They expressed their realisation of the importance of the joint action in order to prevent the repetition of an aggression similar to that which took place on Kuwait."

"These states strive to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and work for the realisation of this through the competent international bodies."

"These states regard the arrangements which are to be agreed upon by them as basis on which they can build to realise a new Arab order."

"They also think that the current phase following the liberation of Kuwait provides the best circumstances for confronting challenges to security and stability in the region, and for realising a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the question of Palestine."

"These states believe that convening an international peace conference under United Nations auspices is a suitable

framework for ending the Israeli occupation of Arab territory and guaranteeing the national rights of the Palestinian people on the basis of the related United Nations resolutions."

"These states will endeavour to realise and implement the Taif accord on the Lebanese question, and will work to assist the Lebanese authorities in this regard. They therefore demand the full and unconditional implementation of Security Council Resolution 425."

"While reaffirming their eagerness to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, they are concerned over what is now taking place in Iraq and over what the Iraqi regime is doing to suppress the uprising of the Iraqi people."

"They are also eager to develop friendly relations with Iran, and are looking forward to cooperating with it on the basis of mutual respect and the

principles of international law which govern friendly relations among states."

"With regard to economic cooperation, the parties of the Damascus declaration regard that improvement of economic performance contributes to the bolstering of political stability and serves the interests of security and stability in the region."

"Economic cooperation between them is based on respect for the sovereignty of each Arab state over its own natural and economic resources, and the strengthening of the bases of their economic cooperation as a first step on which they can build with other Arab states."

"They will endeavour to adopt economic policies that can realise balanced economic and social development as a prelude to the establishment of an Arab economic grouping."

"They also endeavour to encourage the private sector to participate in this operation. The Gulf Cooperation Council

member states attach great importance to the bolstering of development efforts in the Arab World."

"The foreign ministers of the states which are parties of the Damascus declaration and the American secretary of state feel that their meeting today constitutes a unique opportunity not only to celebrate the liberation of Kuwait but also to restate their commitment to the search for security and peace in the Middle East region."

"This duty is not shouldered alone by the governments represented here today, but by the peoples of the entire region and the other parties from outside the region who wish to play a constructive role."

"They ... have to confront the difficult challenges before them, while insisting on these principles and showing the same determination and resolve with which they managed to defeat Saddam Hussein."

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

### PRAYER TIMES

06:30 ..... Fajr  
05:47 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuha  
11:45 ..... Dhuhr  
15:06 ..... 'Asr  
17:44 ..... Maghrib  
19:01 ..... 'Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Swifish Tel. 810740.  
Assamites of God Church, Tel. 632785, 683226.  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.  
Terzian Church Tel. 622366.  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.  
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543.  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771351.

### WEATHER

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.  
Assam International Church Tel. 683226.  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

It will be partly cloudy and there will be possibility of scattered showers of rain. Winds will be light and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly fresh and seas rough.

Min./max. temp.  
Amman ..... 6 / 17  
Aqaba ..... 15 / 25  
Deserts ..... 4 / 19

### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:  
Dr. Hussein Haddad ..... 731267  
Dr. Awmi Hawandeh ..... 777665  
Dr. Fayad Halayya ..... 793522  
Dr. Tayseer Khader ..... 608877  
First pharmacy ..... 661912  
Perdows pharmacy ..... 778336  
Al Asad pharmacy ..... 637055

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 651111  
Civil Defence Immediate

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Jordan Valley ..... 14 / 23  
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 20, Aqaba 27. Humidity readings: Amman 52 per cent, Aqaba 19 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Nairoba pharmacy ..... 633672  
Al Salsat pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 644945  
Shimrean pharmacy ..... 637660  
IRBID:  
Dr. Mazen Abu Baker ..... (-)  
Al Shams pharmacy ..... (275823)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Maysoon Hanna ..... (-)  
Khalifeh pharmacy ..... 985417

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Rescue ..... 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Rescue Police ..... 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade ..... 891228  
Blood Bank ..... 775121  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Department ..... 63021  
Hotel Complaints ..... 625800  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Amman Municipality ..... 897467  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone Repairs ..... 623101

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Abdall Telephone Repairs ..... 661101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
Electric Power Company ..... 636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53200  
Queen Alla Int. Airport ..... 08-53300

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre ..... 813813/32  
Khaldil Maternity, J. Amn ..... 642316  
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn ..... 642412  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 636140

### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 664171/4  
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 843845  
Al-Mushar Hospital ..... 667227/9  
The Islamic, Abdall ..... 666127/37  
Al-Ahli, Abdall ..... 664164/6  
Hilal, J. Al-Mahajreh ..... 777101/3  
Hilal, J. Al-Ashraf ..... 775112/6  
Army, Marfa ..... 891611/5  
Queen Alla Hospital ..... 622409/50  
Amal Hospital ..... 674155  
ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)991071  
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)987532  
EBERD:  
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)272275  
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital ..... (02)247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

### MARKET PRICES

Banana ..... 500 / 450  
Banana (Mukammal) ..... 450 / 400  
Beans ..... 750 / 650  
Cabbage ..... 100 / 60  
Carrot ..... 180 / 120  
Cauliflower ..... 180 / 120  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 200 / 150  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 400 / 360  
Dates ..... 500 / 400  
Eggplant ..... 200 / 160  
Garlic ..... 900 / 500  
Grapes ..... 240 / 200  
Lentils ..... 280 / 220  
Lettuce (per one) ..... 100 / 150  
Marrow (large) ..... 340 / 280  
Marrow (small) ..... 340 / 280  
Onion (dry) ..... 280 / 220  
Onion (green) ..... 160 / 120  
Orange ..... 600 / 340  
Pepper (hot) ..... 500 / 400  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 250 / 200  
Potato ..... 100 / 80  
Radish ..... 400 / 300  
Sage ..... 120 / 80  
Spinach ..... 340 / 260  
Tomatoes

إلى من لا يقرأ



## 381 to be reinstated in government posts

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has ordered the immediate reinstatement of 381 employees in government positions and instructed the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to make arrangements for their reappointment in their posts within two months.

A statement issued Monday said that the Cabinet had approved the reappointment of persons who were dismissed from their jobs for political reasons or whose appointment was disregarded or did not acquire former approval. All the 381 persons to be given jobs in government departments carry university degrees or diplomas from community colleges, according to the statement.

The CSC published the names of the persons to be appointed and requested them to call at its offices Wednesday and Thursday to finalise procedures before commencing their work.

The CSC said four of these persons would be appointed at the Department of Statistics, 12 at the Radio and Television Corporation, six at Jordanian Ports Corporation, two at the Department of Lands and Survey, 24 at the Telecommunications Corporation, three at the Passport and Civil Status Department, five at the Audit Bureau, 13 at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, six at the Ministry of Agriculture, six at the Health Ministry, 49 at the Ministry of Education, three at the Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications, 35 at the Ministry of Public Works, one at the Postal Services Corporation, three at the Jordan Valley Authority, four at the Ministry of Justice, 31 at the Ministry of Higher Education, five at the Civil Aviation Authority, two at the Ministry of Industry and

Trade, six at the Ministry of Awqaf, three at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, three at the Ministry of Culture, eight at the Natural Resources Authority, five at the Vocational Training Corporation, four at the Jordan News Agency, one at the Industrial Development Bank, two at the Ministry of Labour, three at the Agaba Railways Corporation, eight at the Ministry of Finance, one at the Urban Development Department and 64 at the Ministry of Health, six at the Ministry of Social Development, two at the Department of Palestinian Affairs, one at the Cities and Villages Bank, three at the Agricultural Marketing Organisation, 15 at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, three at the Ministry of Interior, three at the Income Tax Department, 17 at the Jordan Electricity Authority and two at the Ministry of Information.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran told Parliament last December that the government was committed to reinstating persons dismissed from their jobs or denied the chance to be employed because of political reasons.

He said that the government had issued a clear statement in January 1990 to reinstate these persons, but the CSC received only 544 applications out of a total of nearly 1,000. However, he said, 372 have already been reinstated and the rest will be appointed in due time once they apply for jobs at the CSC which takes charge of appointments at government offices.

The reinstatement of the dismissed employees came about as a result of strong lobbying for their case at the Lower House of Parliament following the 1989 general elections.

Parliament later entrusted its committee on Public Freedoms and Citizens Rights to follow up on the case with the government.

## ICRC sends 600 tonnes of relief supplies to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is Tuesday sending 33 trucks laden with approximately 600 tonnes of relief supplies to Iraq. A statement released said that the trucks contained medicines, food and fuel and were accompanied by an ICRC official from the Amman office.

In making the announcement the ICRC said it intended to provide at least one relief convoy per week to help improve the sanitation and health situation in Baghdad and other cities of Iraq. "This action has to be accomplished very fast in order to try to avoid the worsening of the situation," said the statement.

It is feared that the situation could deteriorate rapidly when the temperatures rise in the coming weeks, the statement added. According to the statement, the ICRC sent its first relief convoy to Iraq on March 4 following an agreement with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and in response to the needs assessed by ICRC delegates visiting the Iraqi capital.

The shipment of medicine, diesel oil, medical and sanitation

equipment, electric generators and spare parts as well as food, especially for children and women, were taken to Iraq by 14 ICRC delegates, according to the statement.

The statement said that on March 10 a second, and much larger, convoy was sent to Iraq with 100 tonnes of food, 40 tonnes of medicines, 15 tonnes of fuel, one complete field hospital, and two water purification lines with their generator.

The head of ICRC delegation in Amman, whose office is organising these shipments, met with Prime Minister Mudar Badran Sunday and received the Jordanian government's backing for the Red Cross's humanitarian endeavours.

Mr. Badran said that the government would do all in its power to facilitate the arrival of these shipments to the Iraqi people. The head of the ICRC delegation, Werner Kasper, said that he feared an outbreak of epidemics because the allied bombing had damaged Iraq's sewage and water facilities. For this reason, he said, ICRC is giving priority to health issues under these crucial circumstances.

## House to discuss laws

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament is to hold a session Wednesday to hear a report by Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri on the current situation in the region and Jordan's political moves on the Arab and international scenes.

The Parliament session, which is to be attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Cabinet members, will hear government replies to queries about a number of issues raised by deputies and will hear the deputies' views concerning amendments to Jordanian law regarding permission of citizens to carry arms and matters

concerning the Radio and Television Corporation.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the House will also discuss the enactment of a law banning Freemasonry in Jordan and will discuss a number of resolutions by the House's legal, administrative and Palestine committees.

The House's Public Freedoms and Citizens Rights Committee held a separate session Monday and discussed the question of persons dismissed from their jobs for political reasons and those detained on similar charges.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITIONS

★ Comprehensive book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre, Amman.

### BAZAAR

★ Charity bazaar at Nuseibeh Islamic Cultural Centre, Zarqa.  
★ Charity bazaar at the women's Islamic Cultural Centre, Karak.

### LECTURE

★ Lecture by Dr. Mu'awiyah Ibrahim entitled "The International Campaign for the Excavations at Tammam — Capital of the South Arabian Kingdom of Qataban" at the Goethe Institute — 7:30 p.m.



MASRI, HOGG HOLD TALKS: Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri met Monday with visiting British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg to discuss Middle East issues and the Palestine question. Mr. Masri presented Jordan's views and demanded the implementation of the international legitimacy and the U.N. Security

Council resolutions which provide for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands. Masri also stressed the need for the involvement of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in all efforts aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the region.

## JNRCS, Libyan Red Crescent send relief supplies to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) Monday sent its 16th convoy of trucks with relief supplies to Baghdad and said representatives of six humanitarian organisations accompanied the mission.

In addition to these, the Libyan Red Crescent Society Monday sent 33 tonnes of milk to Baghdad to be distributed in conjunction with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

Representatives of the foreign humanitarian organisations held a meeting with the JNRCS vice president, Dr. Mohammad Al Hadid, to discuss various needs of the Iraqi people under the present circumstances. The delegates, who represent Oxfam, the British and American chapter of the Save the Children Organisation, the Tunisian Social Development Organisation and the

Libyan National Red Crescent Society discussed with Dr. Hadid means of providing water purification equipment and medicine to Iraq.

Earlier, JNRCS President Ahmad Abo Qoura met in his office with a delegation representing the Japanese Socialist Party to discuss the situation in Iraq in the aftermath of the devastating war there. The head of the delegation expressed his group's readiness to provide assistance to the Iraqi people through the JNRCS.

After meeting Abu Qoura, the delegation members visited the Red Crescent Society's evanescence camp in Azraq and were briefed on the services to the foreign nationals fleeing Kuwait and Iraq on their way to be repatriated.

Meanwhile, further convoys of trucks carrying relief supplies

donated by the Jordanian people continued to reach Iraq. In Tafileh it was announced Monday that the first convoy of six trucks laden with 40 tonnes of food supplies were on their way to Baghdad, and in South Shumab, near the Dead Sea, it was announced that 28 tonnes of food supplies were sent Monday to Iraq.

In Amman, the Arab Emergency Health Committee said that it had sent yet another consignment of food supplies and medicines to the Iraqi people.

In Salt, Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported Monday that the staff of Al Hussein hospital had raised JD 2,765 in donations to the Iraqi people and three trucks, loaded with food, were sent to Baghdad by the local branch of the People's Committee for Supporting the Iraqi People.

## Al Bashir Hospital facilities expanded

By Eithar Khasawneh  
Petra

AMMAN — The coming few days will witness the commencement of work on expanding and improving facilities at Al Bashir government Hospital in Amman in the light of a plan recently approved by the Health Ministry, according to hospital Director Youssef Mustafa Issa.

Work has already been completed on a building to serve as a major centre for emergency and first aid services; it has been constructed in a manner to accommodate at least 112 extra beds, said Dr. Issa.

He said that the existing sections would also be enlarged with new annexes to accommodate 35 additional beds at the burns section, 15 at the internal diseases, 20 at the paediatrics section, 20 at the obstetrics unit and eight at the dialysis section. In all 221 beds will be added to raise Al Bashir Hospital's overall capacity to 750 beds.

Dr. Issa said the growing demand on hospital services in recent years warranted the introduction of improvements and the expansion plans.

According to Dr. Issa, Al Bashir Hospital, the only government hospital run by the Health Ministry in the capital, conducts

nearly 45 surgical operations every day and its outpatient departments deal with 1,200 cases.

The emergency and first aid section offers service to 700 persons, its X-ray unit services 800 people a day, and its laboratories carry out 2,500 tests on a daily basis.

Dr. Issa said that delivery cases are estimated at nearly 50 a day. In all, he said, the hospital has an occupational capacity of nearly 85 per cent all year round.

Dr. Issa said that health centres within the Amman Governorate transfer all cases they cannot handle to Al Bashir Hospital which continually faces a growing demand for public health services.

see the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli problem," and the future security of the Gulf region.

## Prince

(Continued from page 1)

satisfaction, economic and social satisfaction as well as on clearly a military ability to interdict interstate conflict," he said.

The Prince said more of the region's oil wealth needs to be invested in the Middle East, citing a World Bank report that only five per cent of oil earnings had returned to the Middle East.

He also urged quick international aid to the people of Iraq. "I believe the longer the neglect, the greater the bitterness among the people of Iraq, who we are told time and again were not targeted by the actions taken during the Gulf crisis and the Gulf war," he said.

"When we say the war will not be waged against a certain people, evidence of that has to be made clear... if this is not done, then the neglect... will invite violence. There's no doubt about it."

## Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

Israel only hours before U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was due in the Jewish state.

Three Israeli soldiers were wounded in the dawn clash east of a farm in the Jordan Valley, the radio said.

The alleged attempt came close in the wake of an incident in West Jerusalem in which an Arab man stabbed to death four Israelis.

## Fact finding mission presents plan for peace and reconstruction of the Middle East region

## Prince Hassan, Japanese political group discuss situation in region

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday met with a visiting group of Japanese politicians representing the Socialist Democratic Party and discussed with them the situation in Jordan and the Gulf region.

The group, now on a tour of the region in the wake of the Gulf war, heard from the Crown Prince about Jordan's views about the Middle East situation and learnt about the Kingdom's efforts to reach peace based on justice.

Prince Hassan said that Jordan supported peace and opposed all forms of violence as the Kingdom is peace-oriented and tries to avoid further catastrophes and setbacks.

Crown prince Hassan spoke in length about Jordan's economic and social difficulties resulting

from the Gulf crisis and reviewed the various developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Jordan, he said, is committed to peace based on Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands in implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions so that the legitimate rights of the Palestinians can be met.

He expressed hope that the recent developments on the regional and international scene would lead to positive arrangements that can ensure and pave the way for peace and security in the Middle East.

For its part, the delegation expressed appreciation of the Jordanian positive stand and explained the Japanese Democratic Socialist Party's views with regard to the Middle East issue. The party, they said, is opposed to all attempts to impose hegemony by

any party and opposed to waging war or aggression to achieve that goal.

The delegation handed Prince Hassan a message from the party leader and a document containing the main principles of a plan for the re-establishment of peace and reconstruction in the Middle East region.

The plan gives the United Nations the main role in settling the Middle East crisis and calls for the creation of an international fund to finance regional development within the framework of a new system for security and cooperation.

The Japanese group members are on a fact-finding mission in the region and for discussions with leaders on means of establishing peace and stability in the Middle East.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday received Japanese Socialist Party delegation presently on a fact finding mission in the region (Petra photo)

## Peace group determined to bring out facts about the war to the people of U.S.

By Maha Addasi  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite the fact that the war in the Gulf is over the actual facts of the conflict should be presented to the American public with as much accuracy as possible — this is the motive behind the visit to the region of a six member peace group.

"Despite the fact that the war in the Gulf is now over we are not going to give up efforts and we are determined to bring out the facts to be presented to the public in the United States with as much accuracy as possible," said Julie Martin, one of the members of the peace group now visiting Jordan.

"We represent an anti-war movement in the United States, and we are interested in the facts, much of which had been concealed from the public thanks to the U.S. Administration," said Mary Teresa Rogers, a member of the group that has already visited the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip but so far failed to reach Iraq in their quest for the truth about the situation in the area.

"The American people are sceptical of the official media, and are indeed longing to know more about the real situation in the Middle East in general and in Iraq in particular," said William Kelsey, a former pilot with the U.S. Navy turned peace activist.

During the group's visit to the Jordan Times Monday Kelsey described himself as a member of the War Resisters League in the United States.

Kelsey and Rogers told the Jordan Times: "We believe that the American people should be ashamed of gloating over the fact that the number of U.S. casualties was low in the war on Iraq because this proves that the U.S. is best at killing."

Louise Cinkar, director of the U.S.-based Palestine Human Rights Information Centre who joined the group in Jordan, said that many people in the United States did not understand the whole Gulf issue as they were deprived of the real information; she also said that polling was manipulated in such a way that the American citizens were hidden the truth.

Cinkar added: "The real de-

ception came from the so-called Middle East experts who are known for their biased views and their anti-Arab feelings."

"The American public was appalled by the raid on Al Americh shelter in Baghdad in which hundreds of innocent children and women were killed, but the incident was soon overshadowed by the news of Iraq's decision to pull out from Kuwait," another member of the group, Julie Martin said.

Martin said: "Saddam Hussein was labelled Hitler in the United States and the war was dubbed as 'super bowl.' While the American weapon manufacturers expressed their joy over the war, for some, the psychological factor was very important since a war with subsequent victory for the Americans was needed to offset the effects of the defeat in the Vietnam war."

Another group member, Myra Solfer, said: "The first amendment concerning the freedom of speech was violated under the guise of security, therefore there was heavy censorship of the media in the United States."

Charles Simmons, a black professor of journalism said: "One of the issues that will remain part of the activists' concern is why most of the troops in the frontlines were blacks."

The peace activists stressed that there were many attempts in the United States during the war to break up the anti-war movement. One such attempt, they said, was the focusing of attention on animal rights, like forming a group of people to go to the Gulf and save the dolphins.

"Such attempts to distract the public from anti-war issues will not dissuade our movement, as we have no intention of stopping this campaign and we will try every avenue and will lobby and demonstrate till our voice is heard," said the group.

The group later issued the following statement summing up their mission concerning the Gulf war and shedding light on the outcome of their tour in the occupied Arab territories:

We are people from the United States Peace Movement who, with millions of other U.S. citizens, vehemently opposed our

country's aggressive and inhumane war against Iraq. We have come to the Middle East to learn what the U.S. military censors and the media have not allowed us to know about the effects of this war on people in your lands. We have come to mourn with you over the devastating and unnecessary loss of life and property and the complete disruption of daily life. We have come in the name of many others in the United States who are mourning as well.

Our days in the Gaza Strip, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and the West Bank made it clear to us that the war is not over for the Palestinian people. The injustice of occupation was intensified by the curfew. Economic, political, social and cultural oppression in the occupied territories is deeper than ever before. We will go home to insist that our country stop applying a double standard — as we opposed Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait, we must oppose Israel's occupation as well. We will go home to insist that the United States use every means of persuasion at its disposal to move Israel to immediately end the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and to negotiate a solution with legitimate representatives chosen by the Palestinian people.

As we meet with the people of Jordan, it is also clear that you have suffered tremendously as a result of this terrible war. We are deeply saddened by the war's economic consequences here and tremendously impressed by the courage and generosity of the Jordanian people who have responded to the influx of refugees and repatriates and to the most desperate medical and food needs of the Iraqi people.

The stories we are hearing about the effects of the war on Iraq leave us with heavy hearts. As soon as it becomes possible, others from the U.S. Peace Movement would like to visit Baghdad. Our desire is simply to ask for forgiveness and, by listening to and retelling your painful stories in the United States, to resist the evil rooted there and to work for a world that is peaceful and just.



# Jordan Times

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Editor-in-Chief:  
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,  
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

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## Two tongues, old hand

ONLY A few days after U.S. President George Bush made his momentous speech to the U.S. Congress declaring that the time had come to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of territory for peace, Secretary of State James Baker was caught telling a group of Arab interlocutors in Riyadh Sunday that "time is not appropriate" to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East. The logical question that comes to mind in the wake of what might be seen as confusing signals emanating from Washington is whether the U.S. still seeks to speak with two tongues, one to satisfy the Arab countries that formed an integral part of the coalition forces that waged war on Iraq, and the other to appease Israel and its supporters in the U.S. who aided and abetted the war decision taken by the White House.

There is something of a *deja vu* about the recent U.S. pronouncements on the Palestinian problem and the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. If Mr. Bush meant what he said to his nation last Wednesday, to the effect that he intended to move quickly towards a lasting peace in this area, then how can one reconcile such a pious pronouncement with Baker's assertion that this is no time to hold a peace forum that almost everybody wants to arrive at the kind of peace that President Bush was talking about. If Mr. Baker has something else in mind to conclude a just and lasting permanent peace than an international conference under the aegis of the Security Council, then he is invited to synchronise with his president and tell the world what kind of forum or mechanism they have in mind to settle the Arab-Israeli crisis expeditiously.

Meanwhile Tel Aviv is putting up one hurdle after the other to frustrate the ongoing euphoria about the need to settle the issue. The Israeli leaders are masters of the game that brings all peace initiatives including those offered by themselves and the U.S. to naught. Mr. Baker is about to conclude his working visit to Israel and undoubtedly will have already been told to cool it. Instead of Resolution 242 and the principle of exchanging land for peace, the Israeli government will have repeated its sterile peace formula that it floated in 1989 and got nowhere with it. Now Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir wants to resurrect that defunct peace offer from death knowing all too well that it is dead and buried. Suffice it to recall that the salient features of the Israeli peace initiative contemplates continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories in return for some form of limited autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. How Messrs. Baker and Bush are going to reconcile such a proposal with the solemn promise of the U.S. president before his congressmen and people that territory must be traded for peace and resolutions 242 and 338 must be implemented in full, we do not really know.

Many Arabs, however, have already expressed scepticism about the fate of the new American pledges about the terms for a comprehensive peace simply on the strength of their experiences with the U.S.: They have heard such promises all too often in the distant and near past but without any avail. They are therefore impatiently waiting to see how Washington is going to react to Israel's renewed rebuff of this new peace effort. How President Bush will decide to deal with the continued Israeli intransigence would determine once and for all the validity of the charge that Washington is an old hand when it comes to applying double standards in this part of the world.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

WE DO NOT need more political talk from the Americans about the Middle East because Washington has proved through the past years that these talks constitute a successive series of attempts to deceive and mislead us and to throw lies on us, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. What we need, said the paper, is real action that can give Washington's words some credibility for its talk about the establishment of security, justice and peace in the region. What we want is not mere talk but actual action that can help the Palestinians regain their human rights, said the paper in commenting on George Bush's latest statement about the Middle East and the Palestine problem. The paper noted that the Americans are now advising the Arabs to negotiate with Israel directly without any external interference and to take time in a long dialogue and negotiation for peace, but the Americans preached other-wise when they dealt with the Gulf crisis. In the Gulf crisis, the Americans were quick to send their forces to the Gulf and they were quick to launch an aggression on Iraq to end its occupation of Kuwait that lasted a few months, but they did nothing of the sort with regard to Palestine and have failed to send any troops to evict Israeli forces from the Palestinian land despite the elapse of 24 years of occupation of that land, the paper pointed out.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily believes that Washington is now preaching the Iraqi ideas about dealing with the various issues of the region but in a distorted manner. Fahd Al Fanek notes that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has come to the Middle East region under directives from President Bush who has said that the time has come for the solution of the Palestine problem and equitable distribution of wealth in the region as well as regional security. These are Iraq's ideas presented by a non-Arab power, and in a distorted manner following U.S. aggression on Iraq, he says. The writer notes that Baker's mission comes in the aftermath of the death of 125,000 Iraqis in the Gulf war and the destruction of Iraq's military and economic infrastructures to offer a weak Arab Nation ideas that have little chance of seeing light should America's policies remain unchanged with regard to Israel. The writer says that the United States launched this war on Iraq for the benefit of Israel militarily and economically.

## With political battle starting, PLO should be on wagon

By Dr. Labib Kambawi

FOR SOME, the cessation of hostilities in the Gulf marked the end of their troubles. For others, that may mark the beginning of problems. For most, however, the political battle has just begun.

The least that could be attributed to the post-war era in the Arab World is the uncertainty and general feeling of shock and helplessness which has accompanied its devastating outcome. Many Arabs feel very worried about the confirmation of the USA as the undisputed sole superpower in the world and are, thus, questioning the real motives behind the U.S.-led war in the Gulf. This feeling is especially shared by the Palestinians, who, once more, feel very apprehensive and bewildered due to the fact that the staunchest ally of their enemy, Israel, has become the undisputed leader of the world.

Some like to entertain the idea that the Palestinians have put themselves in a difficult position by siding with Iraq during the Gulf crisis. Such a statement, often said, bears an accusative and vindictive tone, and portrays, still more, a simplistic approach to a complex problem, with evident lack, or, intended lack of

understanding of the bizarre circumstances engulfing the Palestine problem. The essence of the Palestinian position during the Gulf crisis should be understood against a background which some know about, others do not and many choose to ignore.

The Palestinians never condoned the occupation of Kuwait, let alone its annexation. As may be revealed in the future, strenuous efforts were made by the PLO, among others, to preempt this crisis prior to Aug. 2, 1990, when Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait, and more so after the invasion, in trying to solve the crisis peacefully and within the Arab fold.

Until the eruption of hostilities on Jan. 17, the Palestinians sided neither with Iraq nor against Kuwait, but rather with what they believed to be in the interest of their cause. How could the Palestinians refuse the offer of Iraq in its Aug. 12, 1990 initiative which stipulated, among other things, an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait if a solution to the Palestine problem on the basis of the U.N. resolutions was to be achieved? This offer must be viewed, in the Palestinian context, against a background of immense suffering and desperation that the Palestinians

have lived through over the years.

Prior to Aug. 2, 1990, the Palestinians were forced, once more, into a position of desperation through the evident apathy of the world community towards the suffering of the men, women and children of Palestine, who were forced by the Israeli occupation authorities to pay a daily price of maimed children, mourning mothers and imprisoned fathers. The intifada is the Palestinian version of resistance to occupation, which most of Europe experienced during World War II with a basic difference; the Palestinian intifada uses stones to resist tanks and bullets.

The Palestinians did all they could to oblige the U.S. and Europe. The PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) renounced terrorism and accepted and met every condition laid down by the U.S. This resulted in American acceptance to start a "substantive dialogue" with the PLO. Such a dialogue turned out to be a dialogue of the deaf as it was not "substantive" and was limited to the U.S. ambassador in Tunisia. Even that kind of dialogue, the U.S. was not willing to tolerate, and it sought the first excuse to terminate it. This contributed to

damaging, still more, the credibility of the U.S. among the Palestinians, in particular, and the Arab people, in general. It was neither constructive nor helpful to create a feeling among the Palestinians that all the concessions they had to give were in vain, and that the commitment of the U.S. to Israel far exceeds any concern for the Palestinians or for their legitimate rights as recognised by the General Assembly of the United Nations, as well as the Security Council.

Moreover, the Palestinians had to cope with fragmented and elusive Arab regimes. Appealing and pleasing feuding Arab regimes was never an easy undertaking by the PLO who was constantly soliciting the support of all Arab states for a solution to the Palestine problem. In this context, the contribution of many Arab states, especially the oil-producing Arab states, towards the solution of the Palestine problem was limited to some financial contributions and symbolic support. No serious effort was undertaken by such states to use their influence or the means at their disposal to bring about a solution to the Palestine problem. In fact, such states considered their financial contribution as a

means to absolve themselves from any other responsibility towards the Palestinians or to solving the Palestine problem. The Palestinians, who helped build many of the Gulf states and continue to do so, had also to endure an alien status in those states and were constantly reminded of such a status. This had tremendous psychological impact on many Palestinians who are stateless and have nowhere else to go because the Israeli occupation authorities have always denied them a permission to return to their homes and land.

On the eve of the Gulf crisis, the stage was set, therefore, for, yet another frantic search by the desperate and angry Palestinians for a just solution to their sufferings. The Iraqi initiative of Aug. 12, 1990, proposing to link the solution of the Gulf problem to that of other problems in the area, including the Palestine problem, provided a new home for the desperate Palestinians, and it was, therefore, only logical that they seize this opportunity. Needless to say, the opponents of Iraq in the Gulf crisis were largely responsible for much of the Palestinian frustration.

Now, that the war has en-

ded, there is a lot of talk in America and Europe about the post-war arrangements in the Middle East, including the Arab World. It is quite ironic that old mistakes seem to be repeated. The future of this region should be primarily handled by its people and not solely by others outside the region. Alas, if good intentions are there, the Palestine problem must be addressed correctly and seriously. Addressing the Palestine problem in a serious and constructive manner requires the direct, continued and equal participation of the Palestinian people at every stage of the process. The Palestinians have decided that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Neither Israel, nor the U.S. nor any other government, can decide for the Palestinians as to who should represent them. Therefore, if the peace process is to start rolling now, the PLO has to be on the wagon and not at the terminal.

The writer is a member of the Popular Committee for the Defence of Jerusalem. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

## Bold, sincere efforts required to achieve Mideast peace

By Daoud Kuttab

JERUSALEM — As U.S. Secretary of State James Baker swings through the Middle East in order to deal with the post-Gulf war problems, it will become more and more evident to him that the Palestinian-Israeli issue is one of the more difficult conflicts that he will have on his hand. Despite the emotions on both sides of this protracted conflict, there is a window of opportunity now that should not be missed. The missiles that hit Israel during the war have shaken up Israel and destroyed the theory that the West Bank and Gaza Strip are absolutely necessary for Israel's security. The end of the war has also shaken up the Palestinians who had pinned so much hopes on Iraq. If this crucial time is to be effectively used, following are some principles that must be taken into account if Mr. Baker expects political success:

● Deal with the Palestinian issue first: Israel will try to persuade U.S. diplomats that the real problem lies in the Arab

World. Attempts to work out any peace agreement with the Arab World will be futile unless the Palestinian problem is solved. British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd correctly referred to the Palestinian issue as a problem that continues to poison the air. The reason that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was able to touch a sensitive nerve with the Arab and Islamic people with the Palestinian issue was because of the clear injustice that Palestinians suffer from. If the objective is to reach an Arab-Israeli solution then the first step must be to address the Palestinian problem. The Arab World will not agree to deal with/recognise/sign a peace treaty with Israel unless this explosive issue is addressed.

● Avoid wasting time in looking for an alternative leadership to Palestinians: Talking about alternatives to the PLO has become the favourite pastime of politicians and commentators. The PLO acted no differently from what Palestinians wanted

nor any differently from Jordan or half a dozen African Arab countries. The PLO's crime was that it reflected Palestinian sentiments. In fact some Palestinians in the occupied territories feel that the PLO did not do enough in supporting Iraq. They criticised the PLO for not getting involved militarily or in acts of terrorism against western interests. And while the PLO's image has been tarnished in the West, the PLO has never had as much popular Palestinian support as it has now. Even supporters of the Islamic Hamas movement have indicated their satisfaction with the position of the PLO. Finding an alternative to the PLO will not only be useless but it will be ineffective because weak Palestinian representatives that are not credible with their own people will be unable to deliver. Only strong credible leaders can make the concessions needed to solve this thorny issue. And then after all only enemies can make peace and one cannot choose the representatives of one's enemies.

● Deal with difficult issues head on: The Gulf crisis saw the U.S. act powerfully and decisively. But the Iraqi president successfully raised the double standard issue when referring to the way the U.S. acted in enforcing U.N. Security Council resolutions dealing with Iraq compared to its lack of zeal in dealing with other Security Council resolutions. The people of the Middle East will be watching very carefully if the U.S. will act in the same decisiveness in pursuit of peace when the obstacle is not an Arab party. Dealing with issues head on also requires that one should not hide problems under the rug. Problems like the status of Jerusalem, Palestinian statehood, the right of return, demilitarisation and the Golan Heights need to be put on the negotiation table and dealt with firmly and fairly.

● Protagonists must come up with new ideas: For too long both sides of the conflict have avoided

to come up with new and courageous ideas. The West should not impose ideas but should firmly encourage both sides to come up with ideas that can bring about breakthroughs. Whether by elections, nomination dialogue or an international conference Palestinians and Israelis must find appropriate media to start effective peace talks. New ideas can include creativity in the negotiated positions as well as goodwill gestures. Israel can release political detainees, legitimise the PLO, allow political discourse and allow Palestinian leaders and deportees in exile to return. Palestinians can show flexibility on elections, interim arrangements and demilitarisation.

● When negotiations start, rhetorical and emotional issues should be left outside: If there is a serious attempt to address difficult issues peace architects must be careful not to allow the protagonists to flood the discussions with well-known rhetorical and

emotional issues. Political positions that contain any of the following terms must be seen as obstruction to peace: Zionism, Achavism (Hebrew for PLO), terrorism, bolocaust, promised land, pan-Arabism, extremists, moderates, fundamentalists, expansionists, transferists. Similarly, Israeli references to the outdated PLO covenant or Palestinian references to Israeli massacres will not positively contribute to the negotiated process.

Starting a peace process in the Arab-Israeli conflict is possible now if the world community will show the same determination to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories as it did to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. This will be the real test of President Bush's new world order.

Daoud Kuttab is a Palestinian journalist living in East Jerusalem. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

## Pan-Arab relations: Future vs. present

By Dr. Maher A. Waked

NOW that the Arab World is on the threshold of a new order, with the old one devastated by the Gulf war, the question is: On what basis should the new order be built? With the dream of a "United Arab Nation" almost totally shattered by the war and the "Arab Nation" more divided than ever, the only hope, nationalism aside, is to work out an arrangement based on mutual interests and by which Arab funds, resources and peoples are utilised for the benefit of all Arab peoples.

For many years, Arab economists and businessmen advocated the rescheduling of Arab financial resources back to the Arab World to make them available to serve Arab economic development plans.

The results of the Gulf war are certain to usher in a new Arab order, one that the Arab countries themselves would formulate and adopt and which is not dictated to them from the outside. This proposed order is liable to reopen the Arabs' eyes to the importance of their region and resources. It is no longer a secret that many Arab oil-producing countries were misusing their oil revenues in ways detrimental to their own as well as to other Arab interests.

The amount of Arab oil revenues placed outside the Arab World is in the region of \$600 billion. A large chunk of these resources suffers from the negative effects of inflation, depreciation and fluctuations in foreign currency values together with losses incurred by the non-performing loans granted earlier to many non-Arab countries through foreign banks, many of which were

and still exposed to heavy losses due to mismanagement and misappropriation of funds.

Now, in the light of what happened in the Gulf it is felt that the time has come for a thorough review of Arab investment abroad even to reverse them for the benefit of all Arabs.

What is needed now is a new way of thinking that addresses issues from all dimensions and relinquishes selfishness and provincialism. It should be clearly stated that no Arab country should have ambitions in the fortunes of others. Pan-Arab economy should be integrated as a whole. Some Arab countries have been endowed with oil and other minerals, while others with fertile soil and water. The Arab World provides almost 40 per cent of the international oil supply. The proven oil reserves exceed 60 per cent of the world's and natural gas represents approximately 18 per cent of the world's proven reserves.

It should be noted also that oil revenues play a pivotal role in the gross domestic product in many Arab countries. Figures show that oil accounts for 60 per cent of GNP in Saudi Arabia, 45 per cent of the United Arab Emirates and 33 per cent in each of Tunisia and Algeria.

Again, the oil revenues are placed mostly in the Western hemisphere especially in the U.S. (17 per cent) and Britain (14 per cent), while 40 per cent is in other European countries, 28 per cent in some other countries, and rest is distributed among various financial centres in other countries.

So the best way to maintain

Arab cohesion and cooperation, is by implementing a system in which Arab income is mostly invested in Arab countries. By so doing the benefit will be for all Arabs.

It goes without saying that the previous methods of Arab economic cooperation, such as the establishment of a few lending funds by some oil-rich countries to grant loans to other less privileged states, were of little benefit to Arabs. So, many of us were disenchanted with their achievements as they were no more than symbolic devices which proved to be worthless and of little value in many occasions.

In the proposed new era, one could imagine a pan-Arab order, by which, among other arrangements, most of Arab revenue is channelled and invested in the many feasible and worthwhile Arab projects. The mechanism for operating such an arrangement could easily be worked out. The important thing here is to undertake to implement the idea as soon as possible. Again, we, not the others, should think of our future first. That is because we are the best judge of our potential and our limitations. After all it is the Arab proverb that preaches: "Better do it yourself for yourself."

The Arab countries have so far depended to a large extent on the rest of the world. They import 62 per cent of the production facilities and 52 per cent of their food needs, while their livestock production is only 1.5 per cent of the world's. This fact shows the dire need to implement plans for the purpose of achieving Arab food security and to fight malnutrition suffered by some poor Arabs by using some of the surplus funds for invest-

ments to attain this goal. The area of the Arab homeland is 14 million square kilometres. Ten per cent of it can be cultivated but only 5 per cent of it is utilised.

It should be noted that the relationship between population and agriculture is still unhealthy. More advanced technology and management should, therefore, be introduced. Consequently, attention should be focused on another problem: the lack of fair and rational distribution of the labour force in the Arab World. This force is concentrated in some countries, while an obvious shortage is seen in others. Thirty two per cent of the Arab working force is mainly based in Egypt, and 14 per cent in Sudan. The proposed order must allow for an intelligent blend of revenues and resources.

In our quest for genuine Arab national security, we must emphasise that security could only be achieved when our problems are clearly defined then openly discussed. In this way, amicable solutions will not be far from easy-reach and thus reliance on non-Arab nations could be lessened.

There is no alternative for the Arabs other than to start a new epoch of balanced relationship in which hostilities will be buried. The Arabs should always bear in mind it is a world of interests which governs relationships between different countries. It should also be realised that the so-called friends of today could be the foes of tomorrow depending on conflicts of interests or shifting of alliances.

Dr. Waked is a Jordanian banker and former official of the Central Bank.

### LETTERS

#### In the name of many Americans

To The Editor:

WE ARE people from the United States Peace Movement who, with millions of other U.S. citizens, vehemently opposed our country's aggressive and inhumane war against Iraq. We have come to the Middle East to learn what the U.S. military censures and the media have not allowed us to know about the effects of this war on people in your lands. We have come to mourn with you over the devastating and unnecessary loss of life and property and the complete disruption of daily life. We have come in the name of many others in the United States who are mourning as well.

Our days in the Gaza Strip, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and the West Bank made it clear to us that the war is not over for the Palestinian people. The injustice of occupation was intensified by the curfew, economic, political, social and cultural oppression in the occupied territories is deeper than ever before. We will go home to insist that our country stop applying a double standard — as we opposed Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait, we must oppose Israel's occupation as well. We will go home to insist that the United States use every means of persuasion at its disposal to move Israel to immediately end the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and to negotiate a solution with legitimate representatives chosen by the Palestinian people.

As we meet with the people of Jordan, it is also clear that you have suffered tremendously as a result of this terrible war. We are deeply saddened by the war's economic consequences here and tremendously impressed by the courage and generosity of the Jordanian people who have responded to the influx of refugees and repatriates and to the most desperate medical and food needs of the Iraqi people.

The stories we are hearing about the effects of the war on Iraq leave us with heavy hearts. As soon as it becomes possible, others from the U.S. Peace Movement would like to visit Baghdad. Our desire is simply to ask for forgiveness and, by listening to and retelling your painful stories in the United States, to resist the evil rooted there and to work for a world that is peaceful and just.

Anam Ameri, Mid East Witness and Palestine Aid Society  
Arturo Montoya Garcia, Witness for Peace  
Marie Dennis Grasso, Pax Christi USA  
Julia Marten, Santa Cruz Students for Social Responsibility  
Rev. Ronald H. McLean, Witness for Peace  
Gail Phares, Witness for Peace  
Mary Teresa Rogers  
Prof. Charles E. Simmons, National Alliance of Third World Journalists USA  
Rabbi Myra Solfer, Witness for Peace  
Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America  
Fellowship of Reconciliation  
Pax Christi USA  
United Church of Christ USA  
Witness for Peace.

هذا من النهر



## Arab American leader to Arabs: Take the offensive on the peace front

From Rania Atalla  
in Washington

THE recent indication by Washington that the U.S. is willing to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of "land for peace" ought to induce Arab countries into taking a lead and presenting Israel with a "comprehensive package" of peace it would find difficult to refuse. Such is the thinking of a leading Arab American figure and a close observer of American foreign policy, Jim Zogby.

As executive director of the Washington-based Arab American Institute, Zogby has urged Arab leaders to elaborate on the statement made last week by U.S. President George Bush which called for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute on the basis of land for peace. But there are no signs the idea has taken off. "These are still talks," he says. His analysis comes as part of an exchange of ideas with policymakers in Washington.

As envisioned by Zogby, such a comprehensive peace package would have to offer Arab recognition of Israel and guarantee its security, while setting in motion, as a precondition, the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories. Incentives for Israel would have to be withheld until an actual arrangement for withdrawal is made.

"Israel has to agree to behave in the region, otherwise (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir would be the odd man out," Zogby says. "That is how he has behaved so far" and in this context, Zogby points out, any separate peace between Israel and an Arab state would amount to a reward for Shamir.

"If the Arab World recognises its potential for political clout and behaves as a strong partner, confident of itself, it can force a movement," Zogby states.

Zogby is confident the U.S. endorses such a comprehensive plan which, he says, would ideally be led by the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, along with Egypt and Syria. While there may be a divergence in approaches in the Arab World, no Arab country has an interest in partial peace, he believes. "As much division as there is in the Arab World... no Arab government is interested in seeing (Israeli) occupation maintained because they know of its destabilising role in the region."

That factor Zogby maintains, makes it difficult for any Arab country to accept a partial approach and a separate peace which undercuts the broader objective of ending Israeli occupation of Arab land.

"There is still a constituent

support base (in the Arab World) that finds it difficult to live with Israeli occupation," he says, a factor which pressures Arab governments into getting to the core problem of occupation.

Zogby does not believe an international peace conference will take place. "Nor does it have to," he thinks. The idea of a conference is a non-starter, in his view. The U.S. simply "won't buy" an international peace conference, nor would it buy a peace process "in the old fashion," meaning an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. That idea has proven to be "a dead end," an obstacle which would be avoided by the package deal that Zogby is proposing. In this context, he points out, any separate peace between Israel and an Arab state would amount to a reward for Shamir.

The Bush administration, according to Zogby, is committed to a settlement on the basis of security for Israel and justice for the Palestinians. The question, he adds, is whether or not it is going to implement it. "We will have to watch for that."

Zogby faults the Bush administration for having allowed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to become the champion of the downtrodden Arabs and linking the solution to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land with Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

"The U.S. should have stolen (the Palestine) issue from him, denied him the credibility, strengthened respect for the rule of law and resolved both problems (the Kuwaiti and Palestinian)," he says. "Had the U.S. done that, Saddam Hussein would have withered back down to scale instead of becoming a giant."

### PLO

What suggestions for the need for an alternative leadership to the PLO and attempts to create a substitute to the organisation, Zogby is quick to point out that the PLO means more than just an organisation, or merely a political leadership.

"It is a representation of national aspirations," he says, adding that the Palestinian community itself will have to resolve the "internal discussion" on whether or not to project an alternative leadership to the organisation.

### JORDAN

In Zogby's view, Jordan was a victim of the confrontation in the Gulf. Jordan's physical positioning and the psychological disposition of its people have placed it in a precarious position, he says. "Public reaction to the Gulf crisis in Jordan

was a function of desperation, alienation and a feeling of betrayal by the West."

Jordan's policy regarding the Gulf crisis should be understood in the context of its geographic position, and this is a message which his organisation has tried to put forth in the U.S. media. "It is easy to take other positions if you are not in its position."

Zogby believes there is realisation by the Bush administration that U.S. interests lie in preserving the territorial stability and integrity of Jordan. "There is respect for that position" in the administration, he says. Although some tension is bound to remain between Jordan and the U.S. for a while, Zogby is convinced the administration is determined "not to let go of Jordan."

More than a year ago, Zogby had pointed out that the U.S. government was "not doing enough" to support Jordan's steps toward democracy. He wondered, as far back as February 1990, why emerging East European democracies were being supported by the U.S. to ensure economic stability in that area while the same was not being done for Jordan.

Some Arab Americans were critical of Zogby for his support of U.S. presence in the Gulf. That position, he contends, was adopted with the conviction that war was unlikely.

With Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, a split had taken place in the Arab World, and some members of the Arab League had supported the deployment of U.S. troops in the area. AAI supported U.S. presence there because defending Saudi Arabia, liberating Kuwait and opposing Iraqi "aggression" were "the goals that we shared," with the Bush administration, Zogby says.

To be sure, AAI was opposed to the occupation of Kuwait and did warn of the dangers inherent in a Middle East war. Zogby had advocated allowing sanctions time to work. Admittedly he grew concerned about the crisis when the U.S. defensive position turned into an offensive strike, and on the day the war started, Zogby expressed regret about the U.S.'s military action.

"We did not support Iraq's aggression against Kuwait and we have joined the international community's call for the restoration of Kuwait," he said Jan. 17, 1991. "We believe, however, that these goals could have been achieved through a combination of economic sanctions and diplomatic initiatives."

Today, Zogby maintains he is not in any way apologetic about this position. His opposi-



Jim Zogby

tion regarding the occupation of Kuwait and his warning of the dangers of a war still stand, and while AAI had not accepted the notion of formal political linkage between the issue of Palestine and the issue of Kuwait, there is, Zogby concedes, a "moral linkage." In the words of Zogby's close associate civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, it is an issue to "consistency."

### Arab Americans

The Gulf crisis certainly put Arab Americans in a bind, resulting in what Zogby refers to as "internal division" within members of that community. But while most Arab Americans did not want the Gulf war to take place, they still did not support the occupation of Kuwait, he says.

Where Arab-Americans are united is on their desire to see the U.S. acting "true to its principles across the board" rather than maintaining a double standard regarding Israel. The overall effect of the Gulf crisis on Arab Americans was a positive one, Zogby asserts. To start with, a recognition of Arab Americans and their contribution at all levels to American society was underscored, he says.

With real fears of an anti-Arab backlash in the U.S., President Bush was the first American president to strongly condemn hate crimes against Arab Americans. Numerous editorials in leading newspapers stressed the need to avoid racism against Americans of Arab descent. At a minimum, boasts Zogby, the term "Arab American" became a household name.

What is more, as a result of the crisis, Arab Americans have risen, both nationally and locally, into a position of "great respect." The Gulf crisis highlighted the need for input from Arab Americans regarding Middle East politics. Thus, Arab Americans were increasing empowered and are now "in a position to shape the (political) debate" in the country, he concludes.

## In peace as in war, Jordan will still play an important role

By Ghadeer Taher

Special to the Jordan Times

BEFORE Iraq invaded Kuwait Jordan was busy dealing with politics in transition and economic problems exacerbated by one of the highest per capita debts in the world. The Kingdom was campaigning on the regional and international arenas to stem the flow of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jewish emigrants to Israel and the occupied territories which threatened the demographic balance in Palestine. The country was seeking to bring into focus the dangers inherent in the ascension of rightist extremists to power in Israel and to steer to safety the political course at home adopted as a result of the democratisation process and the almost sudden explosion of political pluralism following the first general election in 23 years.

With the invasion of Kuwait, Jordan's attention shifted to dealing and containing the resulting political and economic repercussions, including striking a delicate balance between popular sentiments fired by identification with Iraq in a pan-Arab and pan-Islamic sense against what is perceived as a western anti-Arab campaign, and the Kingdom's obligations under international law which contradicted popular feelings.

On the political level, Jordan passed a crucial test by complying with U.N. resolutions, including an embargo against Iraq, while at the same time adopting a pan-Arab stand that enhanced national unity at home and strengthened the leadership's popularity.

Early assessments of Jordan's political isolation were discounted by several western leaders, who emphasised Amman's indispensable role in the region. In the past week, both U.S. President George Bush and French President Francois Mitterrand stressed Jordan's strategic importance and essential role in the post-war era. Later the European Community foreign ministers and the Canadian foreign minister came to Amman to discuss with Jordanian officials ways to resolve the intractable problems of the region.

But the fallout from the crisis, built upon previous economic and political difficulties, will no doubt continue to haunt several Jordanian governments in the future.

With Iraq greatly weakened by the war, Jordan lost a powerful political ally to its east that served as a military deterrent against an increasingly aggressive Israel.

In the short and medium terms, Jordan will have to continue to depend on foreign aid and the reserve of political capital that it has accumulated on an international scale, mainly through the efforts of His Majesty King Hussein. Ever since its independence, Jordan had to depend on foreign aid, beginning with the

British in the fifties, then the U.S. in the sixties and the oil-rich Gulf Arab states in the seventies and beyond.

The Gulf crisis has forced Jordan to seek a role in a new power balance in the region that would protect it from Israel on the one hand and help provide the economic support needed for the well-being of the state. While Gulf Arab states have stopped financial assistance to the Kingdom, the European Community, on collective and bilateral levels, and Japan, have demonstrated their interest in helping Jordan which they continue to consider a force of moderation and stability in the region. But western diplomats warn that the assistance will not remain at the same level or last indefinitely.

Rapprochement between Jordan and Iran witnessed over the past few weeks and during the Gulf war is not expected to develop as an important element in Jordan's post-war alignment but it will open new markets for Jordanian products. The resumption of ties between the two countries has already led to a \$65 million deal for Jordan to export phosphates to Iran.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

From Tehran's point of view, Jordan is the only Arab country to give legitimacy to the Islamic movement. While Islamists are fought in Egypt, banned in Syria, ignored in Tunisia and restricted in Algeria, they have been introduced into the Jordanian government. But competing forces within Iran as well as distinctly different state ideologies make political alignment unlikely.

While Syria, an ally of Iran, continues to outlaw Islamic movements at home and oppose the pro-Iranian Hizbollah in Lebanon, Jordan accommodated all political forces into the system, which is bound to be a major asset in the political development of the region.

Although officials admit Jordan's relations with its neighbours are tainted with distrust, they say the Kingdom will return to the Arab World's "mainstream" because Jordan is essential for regional stability and has to be a central player in any solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"It is not an easy shot for us," said Foreign Minister Taher Al Masi referring to relations with the Gulf states. "The rift is so deep, the difficulties so great and the time so long — more than seven months — but we will work towards reconciliation."

Assessing the post-crisis order, Lower House member Abdul Kareem Kabariti said the ideal post-war Middle East must address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the disparity of wealth in the area and urge countries to democratised.

"Jordan one way or the other has a role in all three aspects of this order. Jordan's geographical location and

Palestinian population make it inextricably linked to any solution to the Palestinian problem and the country also represents the have-nots in the Middle East and it may be the prevailing democratic model for the area," he said.

Former Foreign Minister Marwan Al Oqasem agrees that if these were truly the characteristics of the new order then "a new era will be dawning on the Arab World" but he hopes the United States is willing "to meet the challenges of peace in the region the same way it met the challenge of war."

Middle East experts in Amman and Washington agree that while Jordan may suffer in the short term, the country remains crucial to regional stability.

Helena Cobban, from the Brookings Institute in Washington, said: "There is a war mentality of that who is not with us is against us. But there are people who appreciate Jordan as a buffer, and when they think calmly about the region they realise it will be more chaotic without Jordan."

Kabariti believes the "road to reconciliation may have to go through Washington," but others argue against taking this path and say the price Jordan will have to pay may be much too high. For Jordan to go through the Washington "door" to ameliorate relations with the Gulf states means that a price will be extracted from the Kingdom, analysts opposed to this strategy have said.

"Will Jordan have to speak for the Palestinians in return for Washington's good offices?" asked one analyst. Jordan has repeatedly said it will not speak for the Palestinians in any negotiations. Analysis fear if tangible progress on resolving the Palestinian issue is not made, extremists will gain the upper hand thus jeopardising Jordan's security.

Qasem said Jordan's task of reconciliation and restoring confidence and credibility with its Arab neighbours would take a serious and long effort.

"Economic conditions in Jordan will not return to the way they were on Aug. 1. We have to sweat a great deal more to maintain ties with our neighbours," he said. "Jordan is at its best when it has good relations with its neighbours in a more coherent Arab World."

King Hussein, who tried to act as a mediator in the crisis, quickly moved after the war to heal rifts between Jordan and the Gulf states.

In an address to the nation, he said "Jordan throws its arms open wide to all those who wish to establish friendly relations based on mutual respect and cooperation."

But a Kuwaiti news agency commentary, responding to the King's conciliatory speech, accused Jordan of complicity with Iraq and of providing Baghdad with weapons for its war, a charge categorically denied by Amman.

"We have always been for forgiveness but we are against burying the past," said the

official Kuwait news agency KUNA. "It will be difficult for our relations with the regime which contributed to our slaughter to return one day to how they used to be," it added.

But Kuwaiti officials conceded that they have no choice but to deal with King Hussein and Jordan.

"The Americans are right: no decent alternative exists. Middle East stability demands that... we are prepared to help..." said a Kuwaiti official quoted by Time magazine.

While western diplomats agree that the United States will help Jordan if the pressures mount, they also say that the Gulf countries may also want to punish Amman for its stand. The diplomats caution that Washington is not going to play the major role in brokering a diplomatic peace between the Kingdom and the Gulf.

But officials and diplomats said Jordan has for decades played an important role as a buffer state in the Middle East and they suggest that this role has not changed.

"Jordan separates two conflicting parties although it is a party to the conflict. The Kingdom also separates Arabs from Arabs — radicals from conservatives," Qasem said.

But for now Jordan's economy is troubled, cut off from traditional aid donors and money sent home from expatriates working in the Gulf states. The country's major trading partner — Iraq — is in ruins and is not expected to recover quickly.

Over 200,000 Jordanians had fled home from Kuwait and Iraq after the invasion, straining Jordan's already limited resources and feeding soaring unemployment. Jordan fears that Kuwait and other Gulf states will opt for Syrian and Egyptian workers to replace Jordanians in the crisis. Jordanians are finding it very difficult to stay in the Gulf, especially in Kuwait, where anti-Jordanian and Palestinian sentiment is running high.

The cost resulting from Jordan's strained relations with the Gulf states could run into billions of dollars in lost aid and expatriate remittances. The lost income only compounded the damage wrought on the already fragile economy by Jordan's compliance with the U.N. embargo against Iraq.

Although many analysts believe that the disaster which befell Iraq has not fully unravelled, they say the invasion has shattered a paralysed Arab order incapable of dealing with economic and political challenges imposed by changes on a regional and international level. Some may agree with writer Fuad Ajami that "there may be no solutions to the problems." Others still believe that despite deep divisions Arab cultural unity and sense of belonging to one community, or umma, will somehow prevail.

## Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

to coordinate their campaign against the government that Republican Guard units were "ruthlessly and indiscriminately shelling the holy city of Karbala."

There was no independent confirmation of the reports on the rebellion by the Shi'ites in the south and another by Kurdish guerrillas in the north. Fighting was reported in another Shi'ite holy site, Najaf. Basra and low-income Shi'ite suburbs of Baghdad.

Refugees said the Republican Guard was gaining the upper hand in Basra. "Half the city is controlled by the 'resistance' and the other half by the army," said a refugee at a checkpoint near Safwan in the U.S.-held section of Iraq south of Basra.

The refugees said they believed the Iraqi troops would eventually retake the city because of their superior weapons. "The army is using tanks," one said, adding that Basra, Iraq's second largest city, was without petrol and most shops were closed.

Baghdad's newspapers reported Monday that President Saddam's closest aides are touring the trouble-torn provinces seeking to rally the military, the ruling Baath Party apparatus and civilians against a U.S.-Israeli conspiracy to topple the government.

Izzat Ibrahim, deputy chairman of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) led by President Saddam, Taha Yassin Ramadan, a council member and first deputy premier, and Interior Minister Ali Hassan Al Majid all called on official and troops "to

redouble their efforts to confront the challenges from the enemies of Iraq... and rally behind the holy warrior Saddam Hussein."

Bayan Jabr of the Shi'ite Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iran had claimed in Damascus that Mr. Ramadan was killed by President Saddam's bodyguards when he allegedly shot the Iraqi president in the right hand in an assassination attempt.

The dailies did not specifically mention the insurrection, but said that the United States, Britain and Israel were plotting to "topple the national and patriotic government... of the leader, President Saddam Hussein."

The dailies reported that more than 300 opposition leaders from 23 factions, including communists, Shi'ite fundamentalists, Arab nationalists and liberals, were gathered in Beirut.

Al Thawra said in an editorial: "They want to bring down the government and replace it with stooges who receive their instructions from foreign ambassadors."

Kurdish officials claimed the PUK and their allies, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, have seized large areas of the northern provinces and are poised to attack the key oil centre of Kirkuk, 160 kilometres north of Baghdad.

The Kurds have battled for years seeking autonomy for their mountainous area. The factions meeting in Beirut are tackling the questions of whether to ask for foreign support and what kind of future government an Iraq should have, conference sources said.

Opposition figure Jalal Talabani said they had agreed on a "democratic, federal Iraq" in a country where the Kurdish minority has long sought autonomy in the north and Shi'ite Muslim fundamentalists want an

Islamic republic in the south.

Ali Al Adib, politburo member of the Shi'ite Muslim Dawa said the conferees would also discuss "creating an Iraqi parliament-in-exile and government-in-exile."

Turkish President Turgut Ozal revealed Monday that Turkish officials held unprecedented talks with Kurdish rebel leaders last

Friday.

Turkey faces a Kurdish revolt of its own in the southeast and the contacts with Iraqi Kurds represented a major shift in Ankara's long-standing policy of shunning Kurdish dissident groups within Turkey and in neighbouring countries.

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# Senna wins U.S. Grand Prix

PHOENIX (AP)—A new car, a new engine and the same motivated driver added up to another dominating victory for Ayrton Senna in the season-opening U.S. Grand Prix.

Senna's latest model McLaren race car, powered by Honda's new V12 racing engine, picked up where the old McLaren-Honda V10 left off last year, with the brilliant Brazilian leading from start to finish.

"The car is good. The performance speaks for itself," Senna said quietly. "It's the first time we were out for distance on full (gas) tanks and it was a great performance. The car proved reliable and the engine was good, too."

The victory, which tied Senna with retired Jackie Stewart for second on the Formula One career victory list with 27 — behind only Frenchman Alain Prost's 44 — prepared to be a cakewalk for the defending race and series champion.

Senna, who built leads of up to 44 seconds before allowing the second-place Ferrari of Prost to cut into that margin late in the

race, did have some difficulties. "I had small problems only with the gearbox and the balance of the car," he said. "But every year we fight with it (the gearbox), and the balance problem is because we have a new car."

Prost, Senna's former teammate and bitter rival, had a problem with his clutch. He finished 16.322 seconds behind as the race, scheduled to run 82 laps, was cut by one because of Formula One's two-hour time limit.

The Frenchman had a simple answer for Senna's dominance: "The problem was we were not fast enough."

Senna, who will be 31 on March 21, earned his 15th wire-to-wire victory, one of several records he holds. The late Jim Clark won 13 times from start to finish.

Senna, who started from the pole for a record 53rd time, was never challenged in the race on the newly configured 2.312-mile (3.720-kilometer) circuit.

With Senna so dominant, the only real battle was for second place. But the Williams of Riccar-

do Patrese of Italy and the Ferrari of Jean Alesi of France both went out of the race after making good runs at the runnerup spot.

Patrese was running second on lap 50 when he spun to a stop on the circuit. As he sat in the car attempting to get it restarted, the Benetton-Ford of Roberto Moreno of Brazil sliced through the front of the Williams, scattering debris around the course and spinning Moreno out of the race.

Alesi, second here for Tyrrell as a rookie last year, made a strong showing in his Ferrari debut, running second through lap 68. On the next trip around the 12-turn course, flames began shooting from the gearbox area in the rear of the car and Alesi was forced to slow. He ran several more laps before finally parking out on the circuit.

That left Prost, who started second in the 26-car field, back in the runnerup position. Brazilian Nelson Piquet, like Prost a three-time Formula One champion, was third, followed by young Italian Stefano Modena in the Tyrrell-Honda, the last car on the

lead lap.

Satoru Nakajima of Japan, driving the second Tyrrell-Honda, was one lap behind in fifth, with countryman Aguri Suzuki in a Lola-Ford earning the final championship point for finishing sixth, two laps back.

Only nine cars were running at the end.

Nigel Mansell of England, making his first start for Williams, was running third on lap 35 when he began to slow with a gearbox problem. He stopped on the next lap, then got out of the cockpit and pushed the car to a safe position behind the concrete barriers lining the circuit.

Moments later, on lap 37, Gerhard Berger of Austria, Senna's McLaren teammate, parked his car after experiencing problems with the fuel pressure. Berger was running fifth when he stopped.

The race, run here for the third time, continued to struggle for support with a crowd estimated at only about 18,500 turning out in warm, partly cloudy weather.

# Sacchi rules Milan out of Italian title race

Reuters

AC MILAN coach Arrigo Sacchi ruled his side out of the Italian title race after their 2-0 defeat by Sampdoria in Genoa Sunday, a result which leaves joint leaders Sampdoria and Internazionale three today points clear of Milan.

"It's clear that today we have been knocked out of the championship race," said Sacchi, after a defeat which followed hard on the heels of Milan's disappointing home draw with Olympique Marseille in a European Cup quarter-final first leg.

"We've been the best side for a long time. And that has cost us a lot of effort and sacrifices and it's difficult to always maintain the very highest standards."

"At the moment, we're just not there (at those high levels) anymore," added Sacchi, whose team have won the European Cup for the last two seasons.

In Milan, Internazionale scored a predictable win over a Juventus side who, despite a convincing win against FC Liege in a mid-week Cup Winners' Cup tie, could not live with Inter.

For Juventus, whose World Cup hero "Toto" Schillaci came on as a second half substitute, this third defeat in four League games puts them right out of the championship picture but does not jeopardize the immediate future of coach Gigi Maifredi.

## European Soccer

"Our coach will respect his contract (valid to the end of this season) with Juventus just like Juventus will respect their contract with him," Juventus President Vittorio Chiusano said.

One coach whose contract will not be respected is Romanian Mircea Lucescu who was sacked by Pisa hours after his side had lost a vital relegation battle, 2-1 to Cagliari.

The Spanish press roared "Cyclone Barcelona" and "Barcelona, unstoppable," after the first division leaders walloped Athletic Bilbao 6-0, the Basque side's heaviest home defeat since 1950.

Meanwhile Real Madrid's fans, now accustomed to defeat, did not hat an eyelid when the defending league champions lost 3-2 at home to Real Sociedad, the visitors' first win at the Santiago Bernabé Stadium in 47 matches.

Watching the debacle was John Toshack, the Welshman sacked by Real Madrid earlier this season, who this summer will return for his second spell as Sociedad coach.

In Germany, Bayern Munich coach Jupp Heynckes bailed his team's 3-0 win at midtable VfB Stuttgart Saturday as their best performance for three years.

# Bubka and Conway seek new world marks

SEVILLE, Spain (AP)—A 20-foot pole vault... and an 8-foot indoor high jump... both appear possible within the near future. That's after pole vaulter Sergei Bubka of the Soviet Union and high jumper Hollis Conway of the United States made gallant efforts at those rarified heights in the World Indoor Championships that ended Sunday.

Bubka, winner of the pole vault at 6.00 metres said he thought a 6.10-metre jump would be possible this year.

Conway, winner of the high jump with an American indoor record of 2.40 metres, said he thought he will eventually reach 2.44 metres. But that will have to wait until the outdoor season.

Only one high jumper, Javier Sotomayor of Cuba, has scored as high as 2.44 metres, reaching that height at San Juan, Puerto Rico, on July 29, 1980.

"I knew it was going to be a good jump for me," Conway said after breaking his U.S. indoor record of 2.37 metres with the year's best jump, better missing three times at 2.44 metres.

"I even felt I could break that world (indoor) record" of 2.43 metres, set by Sotomayor at the 1989 World Indoor Championships at Budapest, Hungary.

"But if it was not today, it's going to be soon. I am very strong."

"My winter training has been very good. So my next goal is Tokyo (site of the World Out-

# Sabatini beats Graf in Florida tennis tournament

BOCA RATON, Florida (Agencies)—Gabriela Sabatini put all elements of her now well-rounded game together to beat seed Steffi Graf 6-4 7-6 Sunday to repeat as champion of the \$500,000 Virginia Slims of Florida Women's Tennis Tournament.

"I think I have everything," said Sabatini, who earned \$100,000 for her victory. "I've started to use everything and I feel very comfortable with many shots."

Graf, who will lose her number one ranking Monday to Monica Seles after a reign of more than three years, did not have control of her famed forehand as often again she fell to the Florida jinx which seems to doom her against Sabatini.

The fourth-ranked Argentine, who trails 20-7 in their career match-up, has beaten Graf all four times they have played in Florida.

"It's disappointing," said Graf, who settled for \$40,000. "I played, so well the other days, but I wasn't able to do it today. I wish I could've, but she played well."

Sabatini has gone from being just a force from the baseline to a player who can dominate all over the court.

Not long ago it was something special to see Sabatini at the net. Since gaining confidence with her volley Sabatini's game has soared and brought her first Grand Slam title at last year's U.S. Open.

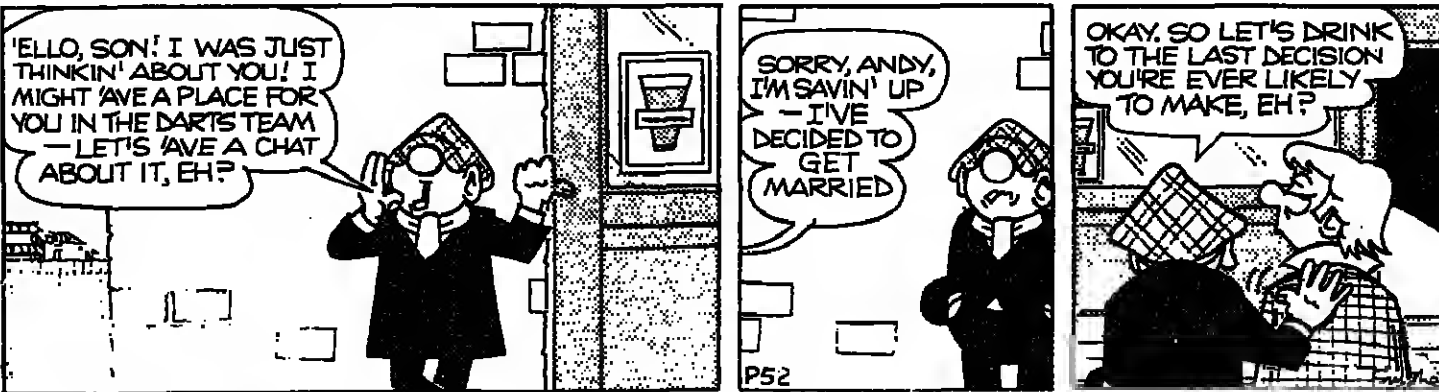
Against Graf, the Argentine won 23 of 36 points she contested at the net.

"I'm the more aggressive on court," Sabatini said when asked to explain her recent success against Graf. "I'm attacked more. Probably I'm the more complete player."

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff



## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY MARCH 12, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) A day to look straight at how far you have progressed in material matters and to make sure you are handling them on a strictly moral basis.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) You want some pleasant moments now and there is no reason why you should not have them so long as you live the golden rule and do not hurt others.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) This is the time to make sure that you do open up some improved conditions in your life by meditating and concentrating upon lofty principles.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) This is the time to be sure you think in terms of what you can do for your good friends as well as what they can do for you and much of value results.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Your interest in the lighter side of life can await performing the civic and public duties to which you are committed to as a good citizen.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Your longings can now be reduced to a workable success especially if you are with wise and lofty minded persons who have made a success.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) You have very prophetic insight now into the best manner in which to get along with devoted allies and in a very conscientious fashion.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) A day to find out what

partners expect of you and to go along with the best suggestions that they make that you feel will be best for all.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) This is the time to be of service to all about and to plan that work that can put at the head of your class and your usual allies.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Your interest in having a good time is fine now and are able to please almost anyone that you go out of your way to make a part of your life.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Your residence is a place where you need to calm down and to cool it or you find that you have all sorts of difficulties to follow you.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) A day to first engage in the services of your choice after which you can get off with usual contacts to see and be with close companions.

Today's child: If your child were born today he or she has a natural breadth of scope that will prove very useful in their life and can only be voided if this child is too recalcitrant and spends too much of their time and focus on small items that are less meaningful, the considerable intelligence keeps them from getting in the middle between people who think strongly and have opposite views.

"The stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you.

## THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



## JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

AVVLE

WRONG

MIENER

LEMDEY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

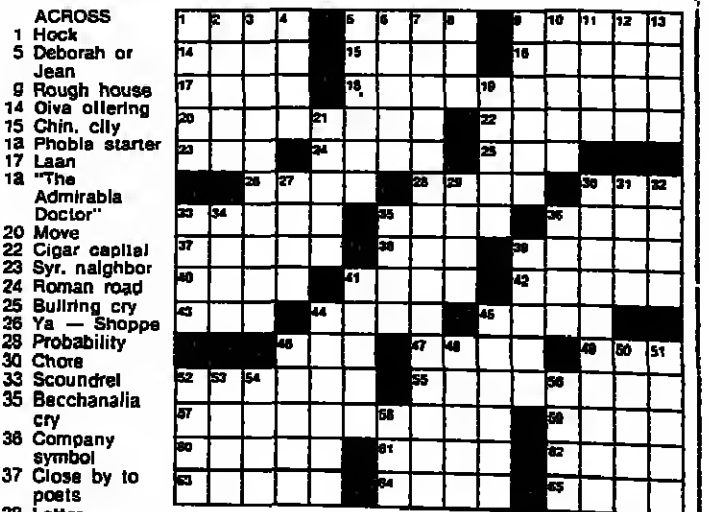
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FUNNY PUPPY BEETLE GOOLY

Answer: She wore a bikini because she enjoyed getting this—"OUT IN THE OPEN"

## THE Daily Crossword

by Hank Harrington



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1. LASH 2. LASH 3. LASH 4. LASH 5. LASH 6. LASH 7. LASH 8. LASH 9. LASH 10. LASH 11. LASH 12. LASH 13. LASH 14. LASH 15. LASH 16. LASH 17. LASH 18. LASH 19. LASH 20. LASH 21. LASH 22. LASH 23. LASH 24. LASH 25. LASH 26. LASH 27. LASH 28. LASH 29. LASH 30. LASH 31. LASH 32. LASH 33. LASH 34. LASH 35. LASH 36. LASH 37. LASH 38. LASH 39. LASH 40. LASH 41. LASH 42. LASH 43. LASH 44. LASH 45. LASH 46. LASH 47. LASH 48. LASH 49. LASH 50. LASH 51. LASH 52. LASH 53. LASH 54. LASH 55. LASH 56. LASH 57. LASH 58. LASH 59. LASH 60. LASH 61. LASH 62. LASH 63. LASH 64. LASH 65. LASH

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## Israel devalues shekel

TEL AVIV (R) — The Bank of Israel devalued the shekel Monday by 6.25 per cent to 2.1920 shekels against the U.S. dollar, using the calculation of the International Monetary Fund.

The cut followed Sunday's 5.66 per cent reduction in the shekel's value against a dollar-dominated basket of foreign currencies.

On Friday the shekel stood at 2.055 shekels to one dollar. The central bank does not set new foreign currency rates on Sundays.

The Bank of Israel allows the shekel to fluctuate around a median basket rate by up to five per cent in either direction.

On Sunday it set a new median rate of 2.5522 shekels to one unit of the dollar-dominated basket, down from the 2.4077 shekel rate fixed at the last formal devaluation in September 1990.

Monday's new shekel rate against the dollar was set at the end of the daily electronic trade between the central bank and the commercial banks.

## Spain said prepared to forgive at least 33% of Egypt's debt

MADRID (AP) — Spain is prepared to forgive at least a third of Egypt's \$2.5 billion peseta (\$546.8 million) debt in recognition of Cairo's support of the allied coalition in the Gulf war against Iraq, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Spain's leading daily El Pais said U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady both requested the gesture from Madrid. Washington forgave Egypt's \$7 billion debt last fall.

El Pais said that although Spain may inform the Egyptian authorities of the debt forgiveness, an official announcement would probably not be made until the next meeting of the Paris Club of creditor nations.

Egypt is Spain's single largest debtor. The bulk of the debt consists of outstanding payments for purchases of military equipment.

## Algeria reports huge discovery of zinc ore

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has discovered a huge zinc ore deposit that could yield 1.2 million tonnes a year of the metal, the official news agency APS reported Monday. The agency said the lode was found at Ait Larbi near Bejaia, 100 kilometres east of Algiers. Preliminary tests showed the ore assayed at between 6.5 and 7.0 per cent metal which "would make it possible to extract on less than 1.2 million tonnes of metal a year." Prospecting in the volcanic Oued Amizour mountain range began in 1974 but it was not until late last year that rich ore lodes were discovered. APS said reserves made it one of the biggest deposits in Africa. "It goes without saying that if absolutely confirmed by technical studies the project will have immeasurable effect on regional and national levels."

## Syria to get \$100m loan from Japan

TOKYO (R) — Japan will extend a yen commodity loan worth \$100 million to Syria, its first such government aid programme for Damascus since 1987, a foreign ministry spokesman said Monday.

The Japanese government also plans to extend another \$500 million to Syria soon for a thermal power plant, the ministry spokesman said.

Yen commodity loans can be used to buy products from any foreign country. The interest rate on this loan runs at 2.9 per cent per year and payment is to be made in 25 years including a seven-year grace period.

Japan's aid to Syria was suspended in 1987 because of unpaid loans.

Aid to Syria comes on top of a \$2 billion package Japan earmarked for some of Iraq's neighbours which have been suffering from the United Nations-sanctioned embargo during the Gulf crisis.

Recipients of that fund included Turkey and Jordan, each of which got \$700 million, and Egypt, which got \$600 million.

## U.S., allies begin talks on financial help to Jordan, Egypt and Turkey

LUXEMBOURG (R) — The United States and 26 other wealthy countries met Monday to discuss funding for Iraq's poor neighbours as the glow of victory in the Gulf war fades and the economic reckoning begins.

With the war over, the region faces severe economic instability which could undermine efforts to foster peace and long-term security.

The meeting in Luxembourg was called under the auspices of the Gulf Crisis Financial Coordination Group, set up by Washington last year to channel aid to Egypt, Jordan and Turkey — the so-called frontline states worst affected by the trade and oil embargo against Iraq.

"There is more work for this group to do... I'm not here to push any particular proposal but we do have some thoughts," Robert Kimmitt, U.S. under-secretary of state for political affairs, told reporters as he arrived for the meeting.

Western countries, Japan, South Korea and four of the Gulf oil states will listen to a World Bank plan for the region and then try to determine where the cash would come from.

Neither U.S. nor Luxembourg officials could say whether help for countries other than Egypt, Jordan and Turkey was likely to be discussed.

The group has already promised \$10.3 billion aid, funded predominantly by the rich Gulf states, the European Community and Japan.

The U.S. was excused on the grounds that it had borne the bulk of military burden of driving Iraq out of Kuwait.

But other countries, particularly those which have paid large sums towards the war effort, may question this.

Washington has appeared to step back from Secretary of State James Baker's plan for a Middle East development bank. Several U.S. lawmakers have made it clear they would not welcome such a bank if they had to contribute to it.

The Saudis, who might also be expected to put up much of the bank's funds, have been unenthusiastic, U.S. analysts say.

A World Bank-administered aid package would have the advantage of being apolitical, funding countries according to need rather than affiliation during the war.

The Gulf states have put up \$6.1 billion of the Gulf crisis group's \$10.3 billion funds so far. The European Community and Japan have pledged \$2 billion each with other countries chipping in the remaining \$200 million.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other four rich Gulf states are already expected to bankroll a predominantly Egyptian and Syrian peacekeeping force for the region under an Arab security plan agreed in Damascus last week.

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These issues are bound to come up later, as many ministers have already stated the case for OPEC to bring output down from the current 23 million barrels per day (b/d) estimated by industry analysts.

However, any action taken during the talks will depend on whether Saudi Arabia can be satisfied. Riyadh, fresh from helping to win a war and looking at a bill of \$50 billion for this, is not keen to shave its \$3 million b/d output by much.

Saudi Arabia submitted estimates for demand on OPEC oil in the second quarter of this year of 22.45 million b/d 2.55 million b/d above where Iran, seen as OPEC's "price hawk," judges the market to be.

The OPEC secretariat's economists expect demand of around 21.41 million b/d but the Saudi side is unlikely to be swayed.

Saudi Oil Minister Hisham Nazer entered the talks reiterating that he saw little chance that the monitoring committee meeting could be transformed into a

full conference — which would be needed if policy changes were to be agreed.

The tension within OPEC revolves around an attempt by some members outside the Gulf to force the pace for the group to reintroduce production quotas, suspended during the Gulf crisis which began with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last August.

The suspended pact had set a reference price of \$21 a barrel and a 22.5 million b/d ceiling.

With two members, Iraq and Kuwait, unable to produce oil as a result of the war, that quota arrangement looks redundant.

It may, however, form the basis for negotiations when the crisis is deemed to be ended.

Although a ceasefire has been called, Saudi Arabia feels that the right time has not yet come. "The crisis is not over yet," said a Saudi oil source.

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## Dollar settles back in Europe after central banks stifle surge

LONDON (R) — The dollar settled back from its early surge by Europe's midsession Monday, after Germany's Bundesbank led 10 other European central banks in selling the U.S. currency.

Shares on major European markets were mostly lower, except in London, as traders cashed in their profits from gains last week.

Crude oil prices more than 65 cents a barrel weaker due to fears that a ministerial-level meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Geneva would not reach a deal

limiting production. The dollar was quoted at 1.5715 marks and 137.58 yen at 1245 GMT, down from 1.5822 marks and 138.25 yen in early trading.

But despite repeated central bank selling it was still above its London close Friday of 1.5650 marks and 136.30 yen.

The Bundesbank confirmed it sold dollars in mid-morning trading, in concerted action with other central banks.

Currency dealers said a first intervention took place as the dollar was trading at about 1.5830

marks and it was followed up rapidly by further moves at 1.5800, 1.5730 and 1.5745 marks. "They really mean business," said one trader in Frankfurt. The volume of dollars sold for marks had been heavy, he added.

Central banks of Austria, Spain, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Portugal, Belgium, Britain and Switzerland joined in, officials and dealers said. The Bank of England was reported to have sold dollars for yen on behalf of the Bank of Japan.

"Probably the rate of appreciation was as much a worry to them as anything else," said Jeremy Hawkins, senior economist at Bank of America in London.

Traders said the dollar's surge was due to strong demand from businesses after the end of the Gulf war and buying by traders who had expected the U.S. currency to fall, and were trying to cover themselves.

Its strength took many traders by surprise, following the announcement Friday of employment data for February which showed weakness in the U.S. economy.

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## Former Greek premier goes on trial in bank scandal

ATHENS (R) — Former Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, a fiery Socialist who led Greece for eight years, went on trial Monday charged with accepting stolen money and bribes in the country's biggest financial scandal this century.

Defiant to the end, Papandreu refused to appear before the special 13-judge court set up by parliament in 1989 to try five former Socialist ministers over a bank embezzlement scandal.

He will be tried in absentia and faces a possible sentence of life in prison if convicted. The trial is expected to last three to four months.

Three other former Socialist ministers did appear in court — Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Minister Agamemnon Koutsorgas, Public Order Minister George Petros and Finance Minister Dimitrios Tsouvolas.

Former Economy Minister Panayiotis Roumeliotis, the fifth accused, was separated from the others because he has immunity

from prosecution as a European Parliament deputy. Proceedings are under way to lift his immunity.

The accused are charged with crimes including taking bribes, accepting stolen money and breaching public faith in carrying out their duties.

Police ringed the Supreme Court in central Athens to guard against guerrilla attacks — Petros narrowly survived a car bomb attack in 1989 — and to hold back an angry crowd of 1,000 Socialist supporters denouncing the trial as a "political farce."

"Shame, shame, shame," chanted the crowd, which stopped traffic on Alexandras Avenue outside the courthouse for several hours. "Papandreu is innocent. The trial is a joke."

Papandreu denies any criminal wrongdoing and maintains the embezzlement scandal at the private Bank of Crete in 1988 could have happened under any government.

## Soviet air industry to focus on civilian planes

MANILA (R) — The Soviet aircraft industry is shifting production from warplanes to civilian aircraft to expand sales in the world market after the Gulf war, a Soviet official said in Manila Monday.

Alexander, Voinov, an official of the Soviet aircraft marketing company Aviaexport, said in an interview that Moscow wanted to "acquaint the world with Soviet aircraft."

"Soviet plane factories are undergoing conversion into the production of civilian aircraft due to the reduction of production of military aircraft," Voinov said before Tuesday's opening of the second aviation and defence air show in Manila.

"Our participation in the air show here is an opportunity to be able to market and sell our aircraft in Asia and elsewhere," Voinov said.

The Soviets have sent the largest delegation among 80 companies from 20 countries to the air show, which is scheduled to be opened by Philippine President Corason Aquino Tuesday morning.

The performance of Soviet-made planes used by the Iraqis in the Gulf war would not affect plans to expand sales of civilian planes on the world market, Voinov said.

"There are problems, but all these problems can be solved," added Voinov, who is head of the exhibition department of Aviaexport in Moscow. He did not elaborate.

## Japan wants to avoid becoming silent banker in post-war Gulf

TOKYO (R) — Japan, worried it will be denied a significant role in establishing the postwar order in the Middle East, is stepping up efforts to avoid the image of silent banker.

"We're worried that we will keep receiving a bill after everything is decided by someone else," said one government official who declined to be named.

But given Tokyo's lack of effective diplomatic tools other than money, its efforts are likely to achieve little, Japanese government officials say.

This concern was heightened at the weekend when Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was forced to call off plans to send a high-level mission to the Gulf after it failed to arrange meetings



## Soviet parliament warns rebel republics not to block union vote

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet parliament, in a clear warning to six rebel republics, said Monday that any attempt to stop people voting in a referendum on the country's future would be illegal.

It passed a resolution ordering "all necessary measures" to ensure that every Soviet citizen had the chance to vote in next Sunday's ballot.

Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and the breakaway Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have all refused to organise the vote on whether to preserve the Soviet Union as a "renewed federation of equal sovereign republics".

The prosecutor's office and the Interior Ministry of the USSR have to secure strict observation of law and order, to take all necessary measures so that on March 17 each citizen has a real possibility to implement his constitutional right, the parliament resolution said.

"Any infringement of the rights of a citizen of the USSR to take part in the referendum, any limitations of this right contradict the constitution, are illegal and are to be stopped."

The resolution did not say how voting was to be enforced.

The parliament also resolved to send deputies to each of the rebel republics and the radical stron-

gholds of Moscow and Leningrad "to monitor the course of the referendum and render assistance to commissions organising referendums."

This apparently referred to attempts by pro-Moscow groups and ethnic minorities within the six boycotting republics to organise the vote on their own.

The referendum is designed to underpin a union treaty which Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev hopes will hold the 15 republics together in a new, looser federation and prevent a further slide towards economic chaos and civil war.

The political temperature has risen in the run-up to the vote as central authorities strongly for a "yes" vote and radicals and nationalists step up their campaigns for a "no".

Meanwhile, vast crowds poured on to the streets of Soviet cities to back populist politician Boris Yeltsin and call for the resignation of President Gorbachev, his arch-rival.

About 300,000 people turned out Sunday in Moscow, where demonstrators chanted "Gorbachev get out". Tens of thousands gathered in other cities to support Yeltsin, who is likely to face fresh censure in the national parliament.

The Moscow demonstrators listened to reformist politicians denounce next week's referendum on preserving the Soviet Union and the latest draft of a union treaty on new links between Moscow and the country's 15 republics.

It was one of the biggest protests since Gorbachev launched his perestroika reforms in 1985 and raised even further the stakes in months of his political duelling with Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, the biggest republic.

But Soviet television, run by a Gorbachev loyalist, devoted 20 minutes of the evening news to condemnations of the rally and of a speech the day before in which Yeltsin said: "Let's declare war on the leadership of the country, which has led us into a quagmire."

Television analyst Alexander Artyshchev said: "Today we stand before a choice. Shall we preserve our fatherland or blow it up and shatter it into tiny pieces?"

"It is very easy to heap guilt on someone for the failures of perestroika and much more difficult to show the way out of these difficulties. It is not true that six years of perestroika were for nothing."

A journalist reporting from Moscow's jammed Manezh Square said some protesters were

calling for violence. Conservative politicians interviewed on the programme openly questioned Yeltsin's integrity and once mentioned his alleged involvement in two scandals.

Participants at Sunday's rally in Moscow accused the Communist Party of trying to perpetuate its hold on power with the referendum, which asks voters whether they favour keeping the country as a "union of sovereign equal republics."

"We are being asked: Do we or do not trust the leadership of the country?" Moscow's radical Mayor Gavril Popov told the crowd.

"No" roared back the demonstrators. Local journalists said pro-Yeltsin rallies drew 70,000 in Leningrad and 50,000 in Sverdlovsk, his home town.

About 7,000 people gathered in Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, and tens of thousands more in Lvov, in the western Ukraine, a hotbed of nationalism where authorities have organised an additional referendum next Sunday on secession.

Ukrainian coal miners voted Sunday on a proposal to launch an all-out strike to press for pay increases of up to 150 per cent — dismissed by authorities as excessive.

But the interim budget was passed unanimously by voice vote, after Communist Party of India (Marxist) spokesman Somnath Chatterjee was allowed to state: "We will not oppose (it) although we have our reservations."

He was referring to the budget's modest proposals to cut farmers' subsidies and offer some shares in loss-making state-owned companies to private investors.

The political crisis has hampered India's negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for at least \$2 billion in new loans. India, facing a foreign exchange crunch, borrowed \$1.79 billion from the IMF in January.

Businessmen saw the spending cuts and privatisation moves as tools for negotiations with the IMF, pending a regular budget.

President Ramaswamy Venkataraman's delay in announcing early polls has infuriated opposition parties. They accuse him of trying to give former Premier Gandhi time to form another government to stave off polls which Gandhi's Congress Party is unlikely to win.

But diplomats attributed Venkataraman's delay to the need to get approval for the budget and other urgent business.

The Lok Sabha adjourned until Tuesday. Politicians said they expected Venkataraman to come to parliament house later Monday for a mass meeting to discuss elections.

The interim budget, which makes no taxatoo changes, was essential to keep revenue coming in for the first four months of the 1991/92 fiscal year, starting April 1.

Its objective is to cut the 1991/92 deficit to about 6.5 per cent of gross domestic product from 8.5 per cent in the current year. The 1991/92 budget deficit is tentatively estimated at 99.77 billion rupees (\$5.39 billion).

About 370 of the 515 current members of the Lok Sabha, split among half a dozen major parties after Congress lost power in inconclusive 1989 polls, attended the session.

The six-month extension of direct rule in Punjab from May was passed by 321 votes to four against after Janata Dal walked out.

Police Col. Frans Malherbe said that between Saturday and early Monday 36 people were killed and 53 injured in the black township of Alexandra in northern Johannesburg, four men were killed in nearby Tembisa township, and three in Soweto to the south.

"The situation remains very tense with lots of angry people out in the streets. Police are doing everything they can to restore peace," he said.

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Political observers said Kerekou was likely to be defeated if the voting is fair, becoming the first president on the African continent deposed by the ballot box. However, no reliable public opinion polls were available. Final results were not expected before Thursday.

When he cast his vote, the grey-haired president sported a dark green uniform devoid of the gold ribbon, badges and other military trimmings of more powerful days.

International observers and local newspapers doubted that Kerekou, 58, who describes himself as a chameleon, has convinced a sceptical electorate that he also would change his Marxist colours.

One diplomat said voters told him they feared Kerekou might derail the fragile democratic process.

Besides Soglo, the other candidate favoured to do well is former International Labour Organisation chief Albert Tevedjire.

The United States, Canada, France and Germany sent observers to monitor the voting.

"All the party representatives I spoke to said they were very satisfied with the way the voting went," said U.S. Sen. Rodney Ellis, who is among the four-member U.S. observer team.

Death toll reaches 43 in South African clashes

ALEXANDRIA, South Africa (AP) — Police shot a black man to death Monday when a gang armed with firebombs attacked a police patrol in the latest killings in three days of black faction fighting that left at least 43 people dead.

Police Col. Frans Malherbe said that between Saturday and early Monday 36 people were killed and 53 injured in the black township of Alexandra in northern Johannesburg, four men were killed in nearby Tembisa township, and three in Soweto to the south.

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## Indian parliament passes interim budget

NEW DELHI (R) — India's fractious parliament stopped arguing long enough Monday in rush through an interim budget and other essential business to pave the way for an early general election.

The fate of the budget, vital to tide India through economic crisis, was left hanging when Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar resigned last Wednesday, advising the president that an early election was the only way to resolve political chaos.

After days of intrigue aimed at staving off polls which few politicians really want, the fragmented Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) agreed to let vital business through without debate.

One party staged a brick walk-out to register protest at an extension of direct rule over Punjab. Vishwanath Pratap Singh's Janata Dal was the only party to demand elections for a new state assembly in the northern state which is racked by Sikh separatist violence.

But the interim budget was passed unanimously by voice vote, after Communist Party of India (Marxist) spokesman Somnath Chatterjee was allowed to state: "We will not oppose (it) although we have our reservations."

He was referring to the budget's modest proposals to cut farmers' subsidies and offer some shares in loss-making state-owned companies to private investors.

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## Rival Serbian groups demonstrate in Belgrade

BELGRADE (AP) — At least 15,000 anti-government protesters gathered in downtown Belgrade Monday in the third straight day of the fiercest anti-Communist demonstrations since World War II. Serbian officials were to hold emergency sessions Monday to consider protesters' demands for greater freedom.

But twice as many people attended a counter-demonstration staged by Serbia's embattled Communist authorities in a show of support for State President Slobodan Milosevic.

About 30,000 people, many bussed in from factories around the state, gathered near the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers at the rally called by Serbia's Socialist Party, the renamed Communists.

"We will prevail over those who want to destroy Serbia," said Dushko Markovic, a deputy in the state legislature.

Hundreds of policemen wearing bullet-proof vests and carrying automatic rifles stood behind the podium as speakers blasted the opposition and the crowd clapped perfunctorily.

The party has frequently staged similar rallies decked out with red flags and Milosevic portraits, often getting state-run enterprises to release employees from work.

At least 15,000 anti-Communist protesters gathered in downtown Belgrade to demand the sacking of Serbia's interior minister and the head of Belgrade TV, seen as a symbol of the Communist stranglehold on media in Yugoslavia's largest state.

The protesters, mostly students, also demanded the release of an estimated 170 people jailed over the past three days, and an end to censorship clamped on Belgrade's independent radio and TV.

Serbia's state legislature and government were to hold emergency sessions Monday to consider the demands.

The normally reclusive Milosevic reportedly met some students, but refused to receive a student delegation sent by the protesters, student leaders said.

A group of 19 opposition deputies on hunger strike outside the Serbian parliament since Saturday said they would continue their fast until all the demands were met.

Student leaders said they would call an immediate boycott of classes at Belgrade University, the largest in Yugoslavia, if their demands are not met.

In an apparent attempt to defuse tension, only a handful of traffic policemen watched Monday's downtown protest. Special anti-riot units who fought a running battle with students on a nearby bridge overnight were withdrawn.

But several armoured police cars were parked in adjacent streets. More armoured cars and army reservists still were deployed around the TV building, with water cannon trucks nearby.

The Yugoslav News Agency Tanjug said eight students were injured in the overnight clashes. Heavily armed police fired volleys of tear gas and repeatedly charged the crowd, brutally beating protesters.

Hundreds of people staged a sitdown protest overnight, defying police orders to go home. Saturday's violence erupted when riot police tried to disperse up to 100,000 people who defied a government ban to rally in Belgrade's main square and demand an end to media censorship.

A policeman and a 17-year-old demonstrator were killed, and at least 120 people injured, according to latest reports.

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## Japanese pledge more aid for UNHCR

TOKYO (AP) — The naming of a Japanese professor to head the United Nations refugee relief agency has stirred her countrymen to offer financial backing for the organisation.

"We've noticed increased pledges coming in since January," said Chikako Saito, spokeswoman for the Tokyo office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. "Most have come in since February."

That was when Sadako Ogata, a U.S.-trained professor and expert in human rights, became the new U.N. High Commissioner. Saito said the naming of Mrs. Ogata to the post as well as an increased awareness of refugees stemming from the Gulf war appear to be the main reasons for the rise in pledges from Japanese groups.

In late February, the nationwide organisation that represents Japanese big business pledged to set up a 1-billion-yen (\$7.3-million) fund to be used for refugee relief work.

The Rotary Club in Japan also has announced plans to raise 2,000 yen (\$16) from each member, which would bring in 210 million yen (\$1.75 million), Saito said.

Both organisations cited Mrs. Ogata's nomination to head the U.N. agency as motivating their fund-raising efforts.

In 1990, the agency's Tokyo office received 126 million yen (\$920,000) in cash and goods from all sources.

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## Quebec liberals approve moves towards autonomy

MONTREAL (R) — Quebec's ruling Liberal Party overwhelmingly approved a radical new policy at the weekend that calls for almost total autonomy for the French-speaking province in largely English-speaking Canada.

Nationalists among the 2,800 delegates at the party's convention defeated efforts by federalists Saturday to soften the Allaire Report, which calls for a massive transfer of powers from the central government to the province.

The report, named after Liberal Party member Jean Allaire, a lawyer who helped to draft it, proposes that a provincial referendum on independence be held by late 1992 unless Canada agrees to demands for radical decentralisation.

The adoption of the report as party policy leaves supporters of the existing confederation without a forum in Quebec, home to most of the 6.5 million French Canadians.

The opposition Parti Quebecois has advocated independence for Quebec since it was founded in 1967 by disenchanted nationalists who quit the Liberal Party.

At the weekend gathering, the federalists appeared isolated as the Liberal Party shifted in line with opinion polls showing thousands of Quebec's inhabitants

want an independent country retaining only economic ties to Canada.

Quebec Cabinet Minister Claude Ryan, a staunch federalist and former Liberal Party leader, walked out of the convention Saturday after delegates defeated a motion calling for a resumption of talks with the nine other provinces.

Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa appealed Sunday for party unity and moved to reassure the federalists. "Our first choice is to enable Quebec to develop within a federal structure. That is our first choice," he told delegates.

"Most of the delegates here don't want one of the greatest countries of the world split into three territories: Canada East, Canada West and Quebec," he said.

But surveys show most Canadians in other provinces are in no mood to accept the demands laid out in the Allaire Report, such as granting Quebec sole jurisdiction over areas ranging from the environment to agriculture and public health.

Many English-speaking Canadians have said they would prefer to live Quebec than break up central government.

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